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The admiral reports to Moscow: our troops have freed the hostages

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From our mailbag

■ People who live in countries with well-developed democratic systems are puzzled as to why such a clamour was raised over the President of Russia's edict, normal in civilized states, limiting political parties' activities in the army, law-enforcement bodies, and state institutions.

Take, for example, the birthplace of European democracy – Greece. Here, as in other European countries, it is a constitutionally guaranteed right to organize political parties and participate in their activities (Art. 29, paragraph 1), and the constitution prohibits the workers of legal bodies, the military, security services and government employees proclaiming their support, in any form, for political parties (Art. 29, paragraph 3).

Employees of state-owned enterprises and local bodies (municipal workers) are prohibited from actively working for the benefit of the parties.

The logic behind the limitations is simple: the activities of numerous party organizations in the army and in state institutions could lead to their disorganization and collapse, and in that way inflict serious damage on society as a whole. So national interests have to be put before the narrow interests of the party.

As for the references to the fact that Yeltsin's decree is not in accordance with the international precepts of law and treaties on human rights they are inconsistent. The edict doesn't prohibit citizens from uniting in parties, associations, or unions. The question is where they can do so.

It wouldn't even cross anyone's mind to demand, let's say, the freedom to publicly demonstrate or protest in military garrisons (though this is also a constitutional right). For that reason the Universal Declaration of Human Rights also stipulates that everyone, in the exercise of his rights and freedoms, shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society (Art.29, paragraph 2).

Georgy Muradov,
press attaché for the Soviet Embassy in Greece

■ I carefully read Alexander Tsipko's article *Russia comes to life* appeared in *NT* No.13/91.

I agree with the author: the Bolshevik revolution will never be given legitimacy, it was truly a tragic venture, an attempt to attain the unattainable and a primitive utopia indeed. I also agree that tsarist Russia was an attractive country in many ways: rapid economic growth beginning in the 1890's, a rich commodity market, brilliant scholars and great Russian art and literature. If everything was really that good, though, can the venture of 1917 really count on a success? It's impossible not to see the serious flaws in Russian society when reading honest Russian writers. In no way I relieve the Bolsheviks of historical responsibility for what had happened. But you must also recognize how ready a remarkable percentage of the population was for tyranny and violence. It wans't for nothing that Nikolai Leskov wrote: the first thing the Russian peasant will do when he is set free is look for someone to rob.

In his article Tsipko distinctly traces the ideology of the "derzhavnik" (great-power jingoists), the guardian of the empire, back to itself. The author persistently suggests that we return to the heritage of the Russian empire and reproaches the Democrats for fighting for the RSFSR's (Russia's) sovereignty instead of for power in the highest levels of the leadership of the USSR. How to fight, however, is completely unclear: should we overthrow the government or fight for a majority in the Union

They beat us with clubs, but we don't take offense...

■ The letter of reader D.Labareshnykh ("From our mailbag", No.21/91), in which he "flogged" the famous scholar Leonid Vasilyev (with a threat to bring an action against him for fascism) can't be left unanswered. Take, for instance, the following passage: "It's a pity I don't have time to leaf through the files for the past years – I am sure I would come across some articles by Vasilyev in which he glorified the CPSU and its 'leader,' his namesake – and I called him 'monkey' as early as 1975."

I would like to ask such a recklessly bold writer, how large the audience was before which he exposed the monkey. I dare say the writer was flaunting in front of his wife in the kitchen, otherwise he would have been locked up for about six years or so under what was then Article 70 of Criminal Law. But since the writer modestly doesn't mention a prison term, he'd better keep silent about his "boldness", which obviously isn't worth much. Although D.Labareshnikh "doesn't have time to leaf through the files" he knows for sure that Leonid Vasilyev "glorified the Communist Party and its leader's namesake." To read old newspapers is never a sin, my dear. It also wouldn't have been a sin to go to the library and take out some of Vasilyev's books, which were written in the period of "stagnation," and read a little. I became familiar with Vasilyev's works in those particular years, and already then he so openly fought for such European values and principles as private property, the market, civil society, democracy, and human rights. In those rotten years, when people had lost heart and all seemed meaningless, Vasilyev's article *Phenomenon of Power-Property* in the book *Types of Social Relations in the East in the Middle Ages*, Moscow, 1982) boosted my spirits. In the article the author revealed the structure

"When a Russian peasant is set free he'll look for someone to rob"

"The writer was flaunting in front of his wife in the kitchen"

Yeltsin's decree and human rights

parliament. In the British Empire, including India and a great number of colonies (even if after World War I), can you even imagine announcing free elections in some kind of an imperial parliament? How many seats would the British have won? Very few. Would they have it any better now? The empire would have been intact, but it would have only been worse for the British: certainly David Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, and Margaret Thatcher would not have been among the prime ministers.

The analogy "Moscow – the Third Rome", completely absurd in our time, is still alive in the minds of the millions of people who stand in line every day for all of their necessities, even bread. Certainly everyone of these outcasts thinks: Sure, we don't live well – in poverty, without rights, in lies and hypocrisy, but just you wait! Just what, in essence, are we waiting for? It's a mirage and putrefaction. Empty words. "But in fact everyone is afraid of us," some home-bred "derzhavnik" will say. The famous bandit, Valya Babkin, once lived in our street. He walked around with either a knife or a razor, and everyone was afraid of him. Do we really need that kind of fame?

Let's look at it from the point of view of ordinary man: where would he live better, with more freedom and more money? In an immense empire, over which the sun never sets, or in small but cozy Switzerland? Where would it be better for a scholar or Nobel Prize laureate to live, in the Third Reich or in milky Denmark? The size of a state and the number of people that live there say nothing about the prosperity or freedom of its people. The Russian empire collapsed just as did Carthage and Byzantium. However, regretable this fact might be one should think not about the reanimation of the corpse, but rather of the living people and their children.

A.Bulat,
scientific worker
Leningrad, USSR

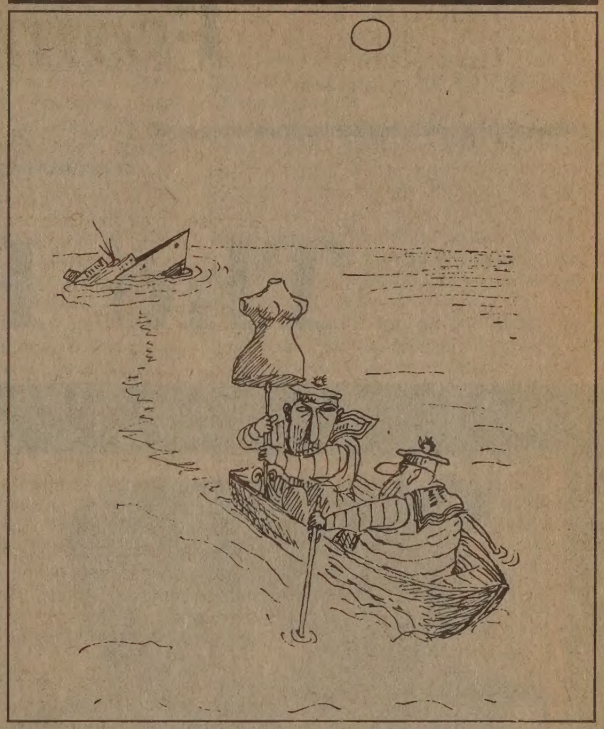
■ I've been wanting to read something about Stalin's 5th of May (1941) speech for a long time, but not a single publication wrote about it, not even *Krasnaya Zvezda*. Finally L.Bezymensky's article appeared in *NT* (19/91). I would like to believe that you really try to find out the truth and not just look for new evidence of Stalin's faults.

We have been taught for a long time that Stalin's errors were to blame for everything.

But the opposite follows from the author's narration. As early as 1940 Stalin said that our adversary would be Germany, not England and France, and that war would break out no later than 1942. He gave the order (hoping to delay the outbreak of war) to prepare for an aggression so as not to give our enemy a chance of provocations. However, it turned out that that was beyond the power of the General Staff under Marshal Zhukov. The plan contained a gross error: the new border selected for the reinforced line to repel the aggression was completely unprepared. And it was clear that they would not be able to properly prepare the border before 1942, the more so by 1941. It was already too late to correct the mistake. Even concentrating troops in the area near the border in good time and making them perfectly ready for action only aggravated the situation. Had we been involved into border hostilities and managed to bring up troops there, they all would have annihilated. Hitler's strategy of blitzkrieg was built just around that: to annihilate the Red Army in the border regions, at least west of the Dnieper. But every cloud has a silver lining: our "unpreparedness" saved us from disaster. A short time ago this article could not have appeared at all, because it did not fit in the anti-Stalin hysteria which has raged over the last three years. And for all that no one needs what I write – I am not exposing the "moustached bandit" (Stalin)...

M.Ladzin,
Severodvinsk, USSR

THE WAY I SEE IT



Drawing by Victor Bogorad

and laws of the barrack-like state (it was clearly an oversight that the article was published: the medieval East must have been too abstract of a topic). Vasilyev's works showed me that you can convey what you think if you have the courage and character. Since then I have been reading everything that Vasilyev writes. That's why I take this shameless letter as a personal insult.

In regard to D. Labareshnykh's "defence" of Marx from L.Vasilyev – the latter has always stuck to the Marxist concept of the "Asiatic" mode of production. For your knowledge, my dear "defender": those who supported this concept in the Stalin era were shot, and in the 60's and 70's were persecuted by the press and harassed at Party meetings. The most prominent Soviet Sinologist and the author of many monographs and manuals. L.Vasilyev, got it as well.

Lastly, neither the classics nor the Russian people need such a "defence." Some 150 years ago Belinsky said, on a similar occasion: "What is with this susceptibility to offence! They beat us with clubs – we don't take offence, they exile us to Siberia – we aren't offended, but this Chaadayev, you see, injured the people's pride – don't you dare speak – speech, you see is an impertinence, lackeys should never speak! Why in hell in the better-educated countries, where it would seem that sensitivity must also be more developed than in Kostroma and Kaluga, they aren't offended by words.

In conclusion, some quick advice for D.Labareshnykh. Don't bother to seek fascism in the pages of *NT*. There's plenty of this trash in our "patriotic" magazines, which share your views.

Ye.Starikov
Voronezh, USSR

Compiled by Tatiana Chernova

EMERGENCY

The Karabakh

Lady Cox reveals human rights violations

Irina Lagunina

Independent human rights experts of the International Sakharov Memorial Congress headed by Lady Caroline Cox, the deputy speaker of the House of Lords of the British Parliament, were sent on a fact-finding mission to Baku and Nagorny Karabakh and based their report on testimonies of witnesses and personal observations in Azebaijan. The report describes various unlawful actions committed by both Armenians and Azerbaijanis, including the actions taken by the OMON special-purpose police and the law-enforcing bodies. The experts tried to be objective and "give what is due" to all sides, so that no one could later accuse them of being biased and use their findings to further foment ethnic hatred.

The photographer of the Novosti Information Agency, Vardan Oganesyan, was arrested in the village of Ghetashen on May 6 this year (see NT No.29/91) and set free from an Azerbaijani prison only after the Lady Cox delegation had returned to Moscow.

When in Baku, Lady Cox sought permission to visit the journalist in prison, but the Azerbaijani authorities turned down her request. During the meeting with Ayaz Mutalibov, and Viktor Polyanichko, second secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, Lady Cox specially inquired about the fate of the journalist. The delegation was given no proof that Oganesyan was alive and well, although by that time there had already been considerable concern over his fate. The two leaders assured Lady Cox that comrade Polyanichko would personally see to the Oganesyan case. Experts believed that the public attention to the case would be a sufficient guarantee of the journalist's safety.

The procuracy of the Azerbaijani republic released the journalist in exchange for the written pledge not to leave the confines of ... Yerevan and to appear before the Azerbaijani law-enforcing bodies on their first request. Speaking at a press conference in Moscow, Oganesyan told what Azerbaijani prisons were like. His observations vastly coincide with those of international experts.

Arrested or taken hostage?

During the first month of confinement Oganesyan shared his cell with a criminal offender, an ethnic Russian. Then he was

Two fact-finding missions in one area of conflict.

knot

The Karabakh crisis as seen by international human rights activists and members of the Russian Parliament

transferred to the Armenians arrested in the village of Guetashen on May 6, as was he. Neither he, nor his twelve fellow convicts were allowed to inform their families about their current location. The Ghetashen Armenians were kept in a punishment cell for ten days, they were regularly denied food and water and cold water was poured over them. They used clothes they were wearing when arrested. This kind of torture – torture by cold, as it is known in international human rights documents – is a common practice in Azerbaijani prisons. There were beatings as well. Vardan Oganesyan was beaten up himself, although not during interrogations. Special cases investigator Gasanov of the Azerbaijani procuracy treated Oganesyan fairly well. The actual beatings were carried out by jailers after the interrogations. Oganesyan was allowed to read a newspaper only once during his more than two months' confinement. The newspaper was *Pravda* containing an interview with a Deputy Procurator General of the USSR who spoke about the Nagorny Karabakh crisis. Oganesyan was given the newspaper so that he could see the centre's attitude towards the events in Nagorny Karabakh.

According to other witnesses – Armenians held in Azerbaijani prisons and preliminary detention cells – people were kept behind bars for more than a month without being officially charged. The head of the Stepanakert police force issued an order permitting heads of police stations to make independent – without a procurator's sanction or court hearing – decisions about whether to imprison the detainees or to set them free. According to Stepanakert residents, mass arrests and police raids became more frequent after this order. Night-time arrests have recently become the practice. It is impossible to find out who the members of the arrest party are and to what deparntment or authority they report. The commandant's office insists that it never sanctioned the activities of the night-time arrest party, but all movement in the city is prohibited at night, except if sanctioned by the commandant.

The practice most frequently resorted to is to transport the detained Armenians out of Armenian-populated areas. This was the case with Oganesyan: arrested in the Armenian-populated village of Ghetashen, he was transported to the city of Gyandja. "In our opinion," said Lady Cox, "the keeping of prisoners in penitentiaries away from their places of residence restricts the prisoners' access to legal advice and may prevent relatives and friends of the detainees from being present at the trial." The Azerbaijani authorities explain the transportation of Armenian prisoners to Azeri-populated locations by the fear of possible unrest among the Armenian population. Such fears are not groundless. The detainees have a different explanation: by so doing, the authorities try to show them that there is no one to complain to and nowhere to get help.

Besides, in Stepanakert, the delegation received convincing proof of the correctness of the latter version: the detainees' relations did not know where the detainees had been taken to.

Vardan Oganesyan said that a team of investigators from the Procuracy of the USSR once came to inspect the Gyandja prison. According to Oganesyan, the investigators looked at the ragged, blood-soaked clothes of the Armenians arrested in Ghetashen and asked them whether they had ever been beaten up while in prison. Sensing the breath of the jailer behind their backs the Armenians replied in the negative. "OK, then sign this document," said the investigators. The Armenians did what they were told to. The inspection was over.

What is impermissible to the authorities

The commission declared that it possessed a vast amount of evidence of violence perpetrated by unlawful armed groups of Armenians against peaceful Azeris. Azeri villages are often targets of shelling, raids and attacks. On June 28 an Armenian group attacked an Azeri village in the Martuni area. Six Azeris, including three women, were killed and three dead bodies were burned. Similar incidents happened before, as well as after Lady Cox's presence in Azerbaijan and Nagorny Karabakh. The night of July 28, for instance, Armenians raided the Azerbaijani village of Umudlu.

However, international experts were most worried not by the acts of violence committed by both Armenian and Azeri sections of the Karabakh population, but by the numerous human rights violations committed by the official authorities. The methods used in the struggle between two embittered peoples may not be resorted to by state structures.

The contempt for human rights demonstrated by the official structures of Azerbaijan, the deportation and the regular army's involvement in it allow the Armenians to call the armed struggle of the Armenian population of Karabakh, the struggle for national liberation. This is not simply a new political term used in the area. If the international community defines the Karabakh movement as a national-liberation struggle, the Armenian struggle will get a new status from the point of view of international law, in particular the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1977 Additional Protocols. However, the Lady Cox delegation never used this term.

The commission of international experts revealed that the Baku government violated the rights of Azeris as well as Armenians. Azerbaijani refugees from Armenia, the number of whom, according to experts, varies between 120,000, and 200,000 are resettled in the formerly Armenian villages in Karabakh and the Shaumyan district. Thus they find themselves back in the middle of the conflict. "The refugees have the right to live far from the area of conflict," said Lady Cox. The fact, protested by the deputy speaker of the House of Lords, seems perfectly natural in this country. Where are the refugees to be resettled if not in the vacated villages, even though they used to be Armenian villages and are situated in the conflict area? The Azerbaijani authorities even tried to justify the deportation of Armenians referring to the fact that Azerbaijani refugees from Armenia had nowhere to live. The refugees themselves do not seem to object – all they need is shelter.

The commission believes that the passport-checking raids in Armenian-populated villages are used as a pretext for unlawful arrests, beatings, and violence. Nagorny Karabakh is suffering from an economic blockade. The living standards in the region have drastically dropped. Pensions and maternity benefits have not been paid, and Nagorny Karabakh faces the threat of famine. Factories and plants do not work. Raw materials and spare

Azerbaijan stops deportations? Armenia cancels the earlier decisions on the annexation of Karabakh. Russia is prepared to mediate the talks.

parts are not supplied from other areas of Azerbaijan. Hundreds of people are unemployed.

Experts from the Sakharov Memorial Congress confirmed the existence of not only an economic blockade, but also of an information one. The Armenian-language TV station is closed and no Armenian newspapers are available. Freedom of conscience is grossly violated. Only two Gregorian churches function in Karabakh. Last February the Council for Religious Affairs under the Soviet government cancelled the decision to transfer the Gandzar church and the Amaras Monastery to believers from two Armenian villages. This decision was made after the appeal issued by the Council of Ministers of Azerbaijan which regards these Christian churches as Azerbaijani cultural monuments.

"Strange" OMON

The Lady Cox delegation arrived in Stepanakert earlier than it had initially been expected to. The OMON special-purpose police who check all in-coming passengers were not warned about the delegation's arrival. Lady Cox was rudely separated from the rest of the delegation and made to wait until the OMON had found out what the purpose of her visit was. This gave Lady Cox an opportunity to familiarize herself with the methods used by the Azerbaijani law-enforcers. Five passengers from those who flew in together with Lady Cox (all Stepanakert residents) were herded into a small room for checking.

Lady Cox noted that the OMON troopers had no special training. The OMON force in Nagorny Karabakh is composed mostly of Azeris, refugees from Armenia. Thus the mission of keeping order in Karabakh is entrusted to people who feel nothing but enmity, even hatred towards Armenians. International human rights experts believe that the OMON units must be withdrawn from the conflict area, and all policemen must receive special riot-control training on the principle of the minimal use of force only in extreme situations and in proportion to the possible threat. Soviet readers may think that this recommendation is rather naive. What will change even if OMON troopers are told and taught how to act? As long as they feel the support and encouragement coming from the authorities, they can hardly be expected to change their methods.

Lady Cox insisted that regular army units and interior troops did not take part in the OMON operations. On the other hand, neither the army nor the interior troops did anything to stop the OMON. The army brings psychological pressure to bear on the Armenian population of Nagorny Karabakh and the Shaumyanovsky district, thus facilitating the deportation effort. According to witnesses, an army chopper was cruising over one village in the Kirovakan district and army officers in it used the bull-
horn to announce to the residents that the passport-checking operation and the confiscation of illegally kept weapons was carried out on direct orders from the President of the USSR.

Loss of trust

Like after her first trip to the areas of conflict in May of this year when Lady Cox and a group of experts inspected the Armenian-Azerbaijani border, the human rights activists were received by Anatoly "Lukyanov, the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

"The conversation had no results," said Andrey Sakharov's widow Yelena Bonner, "Lukyanov listened to the experts' second report calmly and took the information for granted. He did not miss a chance to draw the Britons' attention to the problem of Northern Ireland and other problems facing Great Britain."

Yelena Bonner believes that the issue of Nagorny Karabakh must be raised in September at the Moscow CSCE Conference on the Human Dimension. Human rights are being grossly violated in Nagorny Karabakh, while the army supports the side which officially perpetrates the violations. This problem, Yelena Bonner thinks, must be transferred to the international level. The West can and must link its economic assistance to the Soviet Union with the solution of the Karabakh crisis, as it has already done with respect to the Baltics.

The Lady Cox delegation suggested that international observers be sent to Nagorny Karabakh under the UN aegis, and possibly a UN peace-keeping force as well. The experts said that neither Armenia nor Azerbaijan seemed to be opposed to a UN interference. Soviet Defence Minister Dmitry Yazov was actively opposed to the suggestion. The Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs said the attempt to deploy UN observers was an interference in the internal affairs of the USSR. The international experience suggests a different approach. As soon as the regular army became involved in the strife in Yugoslavia, the Yugoslavian government appealed to the United Nations and the European Community asking for international monitoring.

What Lady Cox has seen in Armenia and Azerbaijan may seem quite ordinary for a Soviet reader. A lot of people in the USSR are imprisoned without trial, in many prisons jailers resort to beatings and abuse the convicts. As for the OMON, wherever it might operate – in Moscow or in the Baltics – it has little if any respect for human rights. If Lady Cox visited other areas of this country, she would find human rights violations there as well. However, Karabakh is not just any place. Anything that happens in Karabakh is considered in the light of the ethnic ambitions of the opposing sides. There are too many fighters and too many weapons there. The Sakharov Memorial Congress experts believe that if deportations, violence, and human rights violations are not stopped, the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan may escalate into a big war. If this happens, even the renewed Soviet Union will be unlikely to preserve international trust – after all the central government will not be able to say that it has never encouraged the belligerents and has done its best to prevent war. ■

People's deputies of Russia propose a settlement plan

Victor Sheynis,
people's deputy of Russian Republic

A group of people's deputies of Russia, including Lev Ponomaryov, Anatoly Shabad, and myself has visited Armenia and Azerbaijan under instructions from President Yeltsin, Vice-President Rutskoi, and the Human Rights Committee of the Supreme Soviet of Russia. Soviet Defence Minister Yazov facilitated our mission by sending Chief of Staff of the Army, Col.Gen. Kolesnikov, to accompany us.

On the very first day of our mission in Baku we met with President Ayaz Mutalibov and Victor Polyanichko, the second secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan and Chairman of the Organizing Committee for Nagorny Karabakh – an institution set up to replace the constitutional bodies of power in the region. The Azerbaijani leaders thus explained their position: the republic was the target of unprovoked aggression and there was no fighting on the territory of Armenia. The main problem was that Armenia continued to infiltrate Nagorny Karabakh with terrorists. In the opinion of the Azerbaijani leadership, the Armenian fighters had to be the first to go. If they do not comply, they will be disarmed and removed by force. After the territory of Azerbaijan is purged of Armenian fighters, said the Baku leadership, all problems with Azerbaijani citizens of Armenian origin will be resolved. Then it will become possible to begin negotiations with Armenia on border and other debatable issues.

There were two positive aspects in our negotiations in Azerbaijan. The main one is that while talking to us President Mutalibov repeatedly stressed and asked us to convey to the Armenian leadership that the deportation from Geranboy (Shaumyanovsky) district and Karabakh (Mutalibov preferred to call it passport-checking operations) had been suspended and was not planned to be resumed before long. However, we never got a clear answer as to how long the deportation was suspended. The time will depend "on the Armenian side," "on the fighters," etc. The other positive aspect was Victor Polyanichko's invitation to visit Karabakh during the presidential elections or immediately after them to see the major areas of conflict.

Ayaz Mutalibov's situation is rather delicate: on the one hand, he must demonstrate determination to restore Azerbaijan's sovereignty over the areas, which as Baku now, claims, had been removed from the Baku government's control by Arkady Volsky. On the other hand, Mutalibov wants Armenians to take part in the elections and as a result needs some peace. That is why he has entered negotiations with representatives of Armenian communities.

Next we flew to Yerevan where we met with Levoan Ter-Petrosyan, Chairman of the Supreme Sovietof Armenia. This is how he described the position of the Armenian leadership. Representatives of the Armenian people of Karabakh have declared preparedness to arrive at an agreement with Azerbaijan on the basis of cancellation of earlier decisions concerning the Armenian annexation of Nagorny Karabakh. The Supreme Soviet of Armenia supported this initiative, which is a great concession on the part of Yerevan. However, this concession should not be unilateral. The question of the status of Nagorny Karabakh and of the withdrawal of self-defence units (whom the Azerbaijani side refers to as terrorists or fighters), which are mostly composed of local residents, not terrorists from the outside, and which are regarded as the only source of protection by Armenians living under the constant threat of deportation, cannot be considered in isolation from other problems. A package of political decisions is also necessary. This stance irritates Baku: it is regarded as an encroachment upon the sovereignty of Azerbaijan.

When in Yerevan we worked out a draft reconciliation plan and submitted it to the leaders of Armenia (who endorsed it) and the leaders of Azerbaijan (who agreed to consider it). We believe that our proposals could become a useful guide in negotiations, if the Armenian and Azerbaijani sides ever agreed to such negotiations without any preliminary conditions.

The pullout of regular army units from the area of conflict must be carried out before or outside the context of such negotiations (because the pullout is the responsibility of the Soviet Defence Ministry, which Azerbaijan cannot influence). Heavy weapons must be withdrawn together with the troops, not transferred to the Azerbaijani OMON. Marshal Yazov seems to have agreed to this.

The first stage of reconciliation is a bilateral ceasefire. The leadership of Armenia addresses those forces in Karabakh and Armenian populated areas of Azerbaijan which it can influence, and the Azerbaijani leadership addresses the forces under its control urging them to halt all fighting, except self-defence operations in case of a direct attack. Further, the Azerbaijani side must declare that no one but the earlier deported people will be allowed to settle in the Armenian-populated villages – those whose residents have been deported since April. It will also be necessary to liberate and exchange all hostages – both those held by state bodies and those captured by unlawful groups.

The second stage: Soviet interior troops will move in to separate the opposing sides. These troops are the only professionally-trained force which is trusted by the local people. Groups of observers from among people's deputies of all levels must be set up under regional and military commandants' offices. Such groups must include mediators and their advisors.

The third stage starts after the complete ceasefire: restoration of the constitutional bodies of power and formation of a local police force manned by Azeris in Azerbaijani villages and Armenians in Armenian villages.

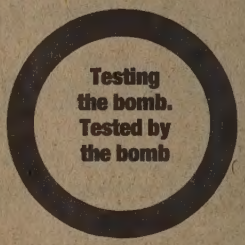
The fourth stage: local authorities use the local police force to confiscate the illegally owned arms. At the same time the Azerbaijani OMON and other paramilitary forces must be withdrawn from Karabakh and the Shaumyanovsky district.

And finally, the fifth stage: Soviet interior forces guarantee the safe return to their native villages people deported since last April.

After that it will be possible to start solving a greater range of issues, including the problem of Armenian and Azerbaijani refugees who have been forced to flee since 1988.

To avert a real or imaginary danger

We continue the discussion, started in *NT* No.26/91 whether the Soviet Union needs nuclear weapons and should continue nuclear tests. The author believes that the United States and NATO are no longer enemies of the USSR, but still national security has to be safeguarded



Konstantin Pleshakov

"If I command that my General should turn into a seagull and he does not fulfill my order it will be my fault, not his", said the King in *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. It is opportune to keep this maxim in mind when we talk with military people or about them.

More and more often we demand that generals turn into sea-gulls, which, naturally, infuriates them. And that, in turn, angers us. Strictly speaking, only one thing may rouse indignation: a general's desire to turn into a dragon. We cannot demand that all generals should suddenly become pacifists. We can and must revise the basis of our military-industrial complex, but we should not forget one thing: the military-industrial complex needs us and we need it too. What for, and what kind of – this is the question.

Another question in this connection is: are nuclear tests necessary or not? This is only part of the problem, as is a moratorium on nuclear weapons testing. The problem is that we badly need a new military doctrine in principle.

Civilians alone, "without generals," cannot work out a military doctrine. Moreover, to begin with, we should carry out a major nation-wide campaign of reappraising currently existing doctrines.

Striking back at our own shadow

Our military doctrine can be called none other than "striking back at our own shadow." It was stated, in the Kremlin and in the White House, that the USSR and the United States do not regard each other as enemies any longer. But Soviet and American missiles are still aimed at each other's territories, and plans of military operations still lie in wait. A military doctrine changes not when political leaders pay pleasant compliments to one another, but when the practical tasks of armies are changed entirely. According to the people who create nuclear weapons and who published their article in No. 26, 1991, we are, ideed, prepared "to preserve a sufficient retaliation potential". Whether we are prepared or not is a different subject. The flight of Mathias Rust demonstrated the unpreparedness of the military. Nevertheless, we still regard Western countries as our enemies and use our basic means and efforts "to resist" their aggression. It is permissible to ask: whose aggression shall we resist?

Can anyone in his right mind and in full possession of his faculties state that a Western country will deal the Soviet Union a blow or will invade the USSR? Let's not ask silly questions like, for instance, is Norway going to attack the Soviet Union. But those people who allege that today, in the conditions of disarmament, there are capabilities for a preemptive strike by the enemy (see the above-mentioned article – Ed.) should be quite honestly considered either very naive, or very cunning. The targets on Soviet territory are marked on the maps of the US Command. Why? To repel Soviet aggression. Missiles are no longer targeted at East European countries, because they have made their choice: peace. The three Baltic Republics of the USSR are not being targets any longer, because of their de facto separation from the Soviet Union. But the USSR still evokes fear, and the actions of the army sometimes seem uncontrolled. We cannot exclude the possibility of the seizure of power either by a dragon-general (attempts were made already) or an orthodox Bolshevik (witnessed such attempts, too) or a populist of the National-Socialist type (one of them even came in third in the July 12th Presidential election in Russia). And then we might again witness the confrontation of the cold-war period. So, Western countries do not threaten us. It should be admitted that theoretically we can be a threat to Western countries.

China was another bugbear of our military doctrine. But who would say, with his hand on his heart, that China will unleash a war against the USSR? The existence of our military-industrial complex can be explained only by a potential danger of attack. Whose attack from the East are we to resist? That of China or Japan? Maybe that of the United States which has equipped its submarines with the "highly accurate first-strike Trident-2 missiles"? If we stop playing games (like the recent one with the call-up of university students to the army) and evaluate the situation from a realistic point of view, we shall see that in the Far East, for instance, we keep a huge military grouping without the slightest need for it.

Defence Minister Grechko remained in his office

In the past Western countries had unlimited opportunities for launching a war against the USSR. When Stalin impudently blockaded West Berlin, in 1948, Western countries opened an air lift supplying Berliners with food and fuel, and deployed troops on the border. But they did not resort to air raids. When Kim Il Sung, Stalin, and Mao Zedong unleashed the Korean war, in the fifties, there had not been US troops in Korea for a while, and the United States had to undertake an emergency landing on the Pusan beachhead to liberate the south of the peninsula. The border areas of the People's Republic of China alone were bombed although none other than China actually was fighting that war in Korea. General MacArthur spoke about the use of nuclear weapons against China. That was not done. Moreover, Douglas MacArthur was dismissed. By the way, Marshal Grechko of the USSR suggested a preventive nuclear strike against China during the 1969 conflict. And that did not cost him his post of Defence Minister.

When we brought our troops to Hungary,

Ready for battle. Against whom?

Photo by TASS

Czechoslovakia, and Afghanistan Western countries did not do anything. In its time of troubles China did not flood the Baikal area with the excess of its population. History has shown, thus, that the existence of threat from the West or from China was exaggerated. Any totalitarian regime needs the existence of some rapacious and dangerous enemy. If no such enemy actually exists, it is invented.

Some people may say that no one attacked the USSR because it was strong. But then, Panama and Granada were attacked. Only those people who have not the slightest idea of the American way of thinking can say such things. Relations with Central American states are a special point. Meanwhile, its political and economic interests affected, the United States did not interfere in Mid-East developments until the UN sanction.

Shall We Disarm unilaterally?

Maybe those people are right who demand the Soviet Union's unilateral disarmament (in the nuclear field, at least?).

No, they are not, notwithstanding the fact that many stereotyped "dangers" are exaggerated. There is no stability, so far. I would say that stability is that feature of a system, which helps it retain its basic qualitative traits. The world order of the cold war period was stable. The regime of Stalin was stable. The regime of Kim Il Sung was also stable until just recently. The situation in the USSR and China and the new world order are extremely unstable. Unfortunately, we cannot hope for their improvement in the near future.

More than a year ago political scientist Francis Fukuyama published an article *The End of History?* in which he wrote that crisis situations in the world would be insignificant in comparison with the failure of socialism. Many people treated Fukuyama's conclusions with distrust. They noted that it was not yet the end of history and that history would greatly surprise the world. They were right. The public gasped with suprise when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. He would not have done that during the cold war. At present he ventured this, hoping to snatch his slice, having seen the breakup of the many-year stability of confrontation (confrontation can be stable or unstable).

A new stage in history begins. After socialism's agony, naturally fraught with the most unpleasant consequences, the time of new aggressors, that is, new Third-World centres of power, has come. Iraq is merely the first. I shall not mention all of them. You can find them in any region of the world.

A pacifist may say: "To hell with them! Let the Americans look into that themselves." This is wrong. The weak Soviet Union will be a hostage of these new potential aggressors even more so, as most of them are in Eurasia, along the USSR's border. A pacifist may say that Iraq or Iran will not occupy the USSR. Of course Iraq or Iran will not reach Ryazan. But we should not forget about the situation in Transcaucasia. The greater part of Azerbaijan belongs to Iran. Shiism is widespread in both Azerbaijan and Iran. Iran is the stronghold of Islamic fundamentalism. Kurds live everywhere, including Transcaucasia. Armenia is at war with Azerbaijan. Armenia has traditionally tragic relations with Turkey. The Azerbaijanians more and more often identify themselves with the Turks. It is very easy to get tangled in these knots of a millenial oriental carpet. This is but one example. We should bear in mind that the USSR or its successors will be responsible for the geopolitical area of the present USSR, no matter how strongly hated the idea of community might be.

The size and might of our army should be contemplated thus, bearing in mind that Western countries and China spell no danger, and that we should not forget about a threat from new centres of power. That size and might will be determined by military experts, those generals whom we command to turn into sea-gulls, instead of entrusting a clear task to them.

Now, let us turn to the problem of nuclear weapons. There would be no problem if only the USSR and Western countries existed in the world. Unilateral nuclear disarmament would become possible then. But when we are amidst the turbulent Third World and when the peak of its development is still ahead, complete nuclear disarmament is utopian and dangerous, as any Utopia is. Nuclear weapons should remain along our Eurasian border, as a deterrent. Nuclear testing is needed in order to prevent those weapons from becoming obsolete and unfit for deterrence. At any rate, a testing site should not necessarily be a graveyard, as is the case with our country. Nuclear testing in Nevada, for instance, does not frighten Americans away from Las Vegas with its entertainments.

Republics have the right to their share

Life is not so easy or simple, however. The USSR is disintegrating. Nobody will see

Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia within it any longer. I have a strong suspicion that Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, and, perhaps Azerbaijan will also secede. What will become of nuclear weapons then? This problem is more complicated than that of nuclear testing.

Strictly speaking, each former Union Republic has the right to its share of nuclear weapons, tanks, aircraft, and naval forces. At the same time, the scattering of the nuclear potential and even the conventional military potential is fraught with dangers which can easily be imagined. True, some of the republics, showing good will and common sense, relinquish their share of nuclear weapons. But why should all republics give the entire military potential, including nuclear, to the USSR or to the Republic of Russia to some extent, which will be its successor in the case of complete disintegration? Therefore, not withstanding the desire and, perhaps, the expediency of isolating themselves in national areas, the USSR should remain a geopolitical and military reality, even if it loses all other functions. The last Premier in the history of the USSR, no matter how stout the man might be, will be given his life-size bust of gold, to encourage him to leave his post. The Council of Ministers will sink into oblivion. The All-Union Parliament will become exactly what it has been persistently trying to become, that is, a harmless talking-shop. All practical matters will be done in the Republics.

Even if all this happens, the USSR will remain a military bloc. Maybe it will lose the Baltic Republics, maybe not, if the problem is tackled in a civilized way. It will be a military bloc with a joint command and the Republics' right of veto in regard to military operations, in general, and the use of nuclear weapons, specifically.

If we do not think about all this in earnest, in the near future we may be confronted with dilemmas which will make current discussions about nuclear testing seem like small talk.

* * *

Let us not order generals to turn into sea-gulls. We will need generals for years to come. We shall not be able to do without them. Who knows, maybe just now a period of a real, not imaginary, threat to our security begins. Of course, it is not the reason for maintaining the same huge army and taking from the dying country its last crumbs to be spent on missiles. But nor is it a reason for saying a farewell to arms. Our task today is, together with our generals, thoroughly to assess the situation when there is no threat from the West and when we should not forget about our Eurasian border.

Will a Union of Clever People appear?

Reformers in the CPSU have lost the final hope that the Communist Party could be reformed. Once again, the Communist Party of Russia has managed to uphold the purity of its principles. What are the political results? The twilight of the CPSU, and the new chance that time and common sense give to the country

Marina Shakina

This summer has seen many political events that reshaped the political picture in this country – the Congress of People's Deputies of Russia inaugurated the first President of Russia, and two new political forces, the Democratic Reform Movement and the Democratic Party of Communists of Russia appeared. The mass of these and other less important events of this hot summer was dominated by two major issues – the crisis of the CPSU and the future of the pro-democracy movement.

Self-immolation continues

As was expected, the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Russia immediately reacted to the "intrigues" of the followers of Rutskoi who convened the Constituent Conference of the Democratic Party of Communists of Russia. The pro-democracy ideologues, Rutskoi and Lipitsky, were expelled from the Central Committee of the CPR, the CPR proper, and the CPSU.

Then came an exchange of niceties which couldn't have failed to give a feeling of intense pleasure to passive onlookers. Speaking at the plenum, Ivan Polozkov called Democratic Communists impostors, while Vice President Rutskoi of Russia lashed back by quoting Gogol who said that Russia had two plights: fools and bad roads. The verbal duel continues with the sides resorting to terms like "hypocrisy" and "marasmus."

It is difficult to sort things out in the formal aspect of the problem. The brandname of impostor may as well be applied to those who first used it, because it remains unclear what the grounds for the formation of the CPR had been – today the CPR has a strange status of an unregistered party. It is formally the Russian republican branch of the CPSU, but it has its own ideology, its own leaders and organizational structures. How can the Central Committee of this party expel anyone from the party acting on behalf of the CPSU? The recent developments have provided a lot of raw material for jokes. Going deeper into the problem, one sees that the CPR is afraid of competition and hastens to kick out potential rebels without so much as listening to what they have to say.

The act of public self-immolation continues – the CPR continues to get rid of its brightest members. Evidently, by deciding to expel "the impostors" the plenum wanted to demonstrate that the CPR was no heaven for dissidents, may they be three times vice presidents. The CPR must have believed that to ignore Rutskoi's schismatic activities might have been interpreted as weakness. Rutskoi was expelled under a highly dubious pretext, which nonetheless facilitated a ridiculous litigation between Rutskoi and the CPR Central Committee mediated by the Central Control Commission of the CPSU. As for Alexander Yakovlev, who has committed actually the same sin as Rutskoi, he has not yet been taken to task. According to Yakovlev, he wondered what the pretext for expelling him would finally be. The uncompromised rejection of Rutskoi & Co. may bring about a situation in which they will have no alternative but to really establish a new party outside the CPSU. When asked by *New Times* several months ago wheter he was afraid he might be expelled from the CPSU, Rutskoi answered: "I am not afraid. If they expel us, we will readmit ourselves." They will admit themselves... to a different party. Common sense suggests that clever people in the CPR leadership will hardly find the expulsion reasonable. From the point of view of the

Drawing by Victor Bogorad

party's prestige, it would be more useful to keep the Democratic Communists on a short leash and to influence them by cooperating with them. Now the CPR has no such opportunity.

As for the former CPR leader, Ivan Polozkov, he resigned from the office of the CPR first secretary and received expressions of gratitude from his former colleagues. The change of leaders is the second major political development at the CPR Central Committee plenum. Independently or otherwise Communists of Russia finally realized that Polozkov's total lack of popularity eliminated the party's last chance for success. Anyhow, the new leader of the CPR is the obscure Valentin Kuptsov. His speech at the press conference after his election did not throw any more light on him as a politician. He furnished no new ideas and focused on the ritual "necessity to seek new forms and ways of work." His attitude towards Rutskoi and his followers was more eloquent – obviously, the new leader of the CPR will not display much flexibility or tolerance.

Gorbachev's silence

Another event worthy of attention has occurred in the CPSU. Alexander Yakovlev, who has never ceased to be the centre of attention of communists and society, resigned from his post as the senior presidential advisor. This demarche can be interpreted as an indication of Yakovlev's intention to withdraw from the CPSU. One more thread linking him to Gorbachev has been severed. The moral duty to support Gorbachev might have been the last factor keeping Yakovlev in the CPSU, even when Eduard Shevardnadze, who is of the same mind as Yakovlev, had already turned in his party card. According to Yakovlev, he, unlike Gorbachev, has already lost hope that the CPSU can be reformed.

Another enigma is the silence of the General Secretary of the CPSU, who is also the President of this country. Despite the numerous difficulties he faced this summer, Gorbachev could have been expected to voice his attitude both toward the activities and expulsion of Rutskoi and towards the initiative of people who had once been his closest aides, Yakovlev and Shevardnadze. Gorbachev only took part in hammering out the new CPSU programme and spoke about it at the Central Committee plenum, amidst the hard-liners' vicious attacks on him for his calm reaction to the Yeltsin departification decree. If Gorbachev has not yet despaired of reforming the CPSU, the natural question is with whom will he be allied in this undertaking? The number of CPSU apparatchiks who can understand Gorbachev is rapidly decreasing, threatening to leave the General Secretary in an intellectual void.

Anti-Communist Liberals

Ivan Polozkov is not lost to this society – he has been appointed Deputy Minister of Agriculture of the USSR. A party functionary of Polozkov's promínence can cope with almost any task, even if he did practical work as long as forty years ago. The press' sarcasm about the nomenklatura reshuffling if futile. The more interesting thing is that something resembling the Communist nomenklatura juggling has started to appear in the pro-democracy camp. Democrats are also obsessed with personal ambitions. Well-known names form various combinations. The latest piece of news from the pro-democracy camp was the formation of a Liberal Union within the movement Democratic Russia. Each of the eight founders of the Union is also known in three or four additional political capacities – they combine positions in Democratic Russia, the Democratic Party, and the Inter-Regional Group of People's Deputies.

The chief role in the Liberal Union will be played by economists who make up half the founders list. For them the new initiative is an opportunity to declare their advocacy of complete liberalization of the economy, unlimited freedom of enterprise, and the state's non-interference in economic affairs and private lives of citizens. No serious party has so far dared to proclaim such a programme. So far, every new party has mentioned the necessity of social protection of the working people. In this respect, the Liberal Union is a new phenomenon, although it remains unclear whether the public will accept it. Politically, the new Union poses a lot of questions. The Union's declaration contains radical anti-communist, anti-socialist, and anti-collectivist principles, other wide-spread political ideas already championed by a number of parties. Is there anything new for the sake of which a new party must be created? How do these radical ideas correspond to liberal principles?

In fact, there is a great confusion of names and concepts. Liberals, democrats, communists, radicals are only code names in the struggle between various parties and groups. After the press-conference devoted to the formation of the Liberal Union, I asked one of the founders, Stepan Sulakshin, whether the new party's radical political image was really compatible with the notion of liberalism. Said Sulakshin: "You see, on the one hand, my political activity is oriented towards current problems and in this context I am a member of the Organizing Committee of the Democratic Reform Movement and a member of the Republican Party (former Democratic Platform in the CPSU). On the other hand, I am the co-chairman of the committee demanding a public trial of the CPSU. These are time-serving political objectives. But I am convinced that the communist and socialist ideas have lost the historical contest. There is no political idea with a future except liberalism..." Don't you think this is a rather two-dimensional approach? "I would call it a three-dimensional, or even ten-dimensional approach," Sulakshin said. "We are shouldering a tremendous burder, and there is no end to the objectives and lines of action. I am also working with communists, trying to interest them in the democratic process, but at the same time I am sure that society must have no room for the CPSU or communist ideas if it wants to be an effective society."

Political scientists have long predicted the approach of a new wave of political leaders, people of new competence and new thinking. This wave will sweep away many of today's idols. So far, however, there are no indications that such a wave is forthcoming. The only real hope looming on the horizon is the hope for what I would define as the association or union of clever people. There are signs of an alliance forming between the intellectual segments of the communists or post-communist movement and the most realistic segments of the pro-democracy forces. The first herald of such an alliance has become the formation fo the Democratic Reform Movement.

...Save Russia?

I shall never understand a state which does not need its citizens

By will of fate I do not belong to any nation. My parents' ideas should have made of me a citizen of the world. Other people's racism should have brought me up as a nationalist. But I am neither. I am a Jew by blood and passport. It was indisputable for my parents, participants in the Civil War, that the assimilation of Jews to the people among whom they lived was definitely necessary. That is why they taught us, their children, neither Hebrew, nor Jewish culture or traditions, and it was instead Russian culture and writers that moulded my character. And it was only during WWII when my family was evacuated to the village of Obsharovka, in the Kuibyshev region, that I learnt from our neighbour boys to what nationality I belonged. For several years my brother and I returned home beaten, for there was always a gang of boys willing to beat us. To beat Jews was one of the few amusements left to village people in those gloomy war days. I remeber my brother was once beaten by lads from a neighbouring village, and our village boys told them: "Do not do it again. He is our Kike. If necessary we'll beat him ourselves. Do not interfere!" There were days when they did not beat us, but there is not a single day in my memory when we could walk down the street without "You, Kike!" following us. Gradually they got used to us and stopped beating us, we even had our own company.

There are no superior or inferior peoples. And all peoples experience feelings which we call nationalism. Unfortunately, nationalism is a social psychological phenomenon with its roots somewhere on a biological level. Even animals divide all those surounding them into "we" and "aliens." According to the well-known scientist Porshnev, the notion "they" is prior to the notions "we" and "I." A bear, a dog, or a pack of wolves guard their territory in this or that way.

A buffalo or an elephant guards its herd. And it is essential to understand this.

We lived in Kaluga in 1952 when the notorious proceedings against Jewish physicians were conducted. Mother worked at a pedagogical department of the Pedagogical Institute. She was fired under a false pretext and not offered another job. A teacher with 30 years of experience, she was not allowed to work even as a charwoman. Our family of four lived then only on my father's meagre pension, as he had retired from the post of a village pharmacist.

Party committee instructors, propagandists and agitators, the press did their job too well. There appeared graffiti: "Beat Kikes, save Russia!" I went to a boys' school and our class was very friendly. But very soon I found myself isolated, no one dared even approach me. First moved the boy who sat next to me at the desk, them those who were behind.

I had never imagined that there were so many Jews in Kaluga. When the repeal of the proceedings was announced, people poured out into the streets and total strangers offered congratulations to one another. It was at that moment that something stirred in my heart. You do not know how it feels to be humiliated and persecuted. They had already started to erect Gulags for Jews by that time, and everybody talked about it.

Our family always led a very modest life. Only at 15 did I get my first decent suit, but I had no chance to wear it, because it was the first thing to be sold when our family was deprived of its means. How humiliating it was to appear at school again in my old suit, for I knew that everybody would see the changes in my family's position. For me then old suit was the equivalent of the yellow star. It was at that time that I started reading Feuchtwanger and Sholom Aleikhem – I was in desperate need of knowing that I had my own people, who would if not protect me at least suffer with me.

The proceedings were over, the "cold summer of 1953" came, and mother was given a job, not at the Kaluga institute, but at a village school in the Bryansk region.

Upon defending a thesis, mother addressed the Ministry to be appointed to a pedagogical institute. Despite the Khrushchevian thaw she was told that with "Jew" written in the nationality paragraph of her passport she could receive a job only in the Far East. Thus we came to Komsomolsk.

When an adult, I had to leave the Far East for personal reasons and started moving to the west. Looking for assistance I turned to the Novosibirsk regional party committee. Their answer was: "If you were moving from the west to the east we could have helped you, because we need such workers. But you are going from the east to the west... You should have stayed where you were."

But I travelled further and reached Gorky, where I did not find any job either. I was granted an audience with the head of an ideological department there. He examined my excellent references, and then asked for the passport. After that, looking me straight in the eyes he pronounced: "No, we are not going to help **you**." Everything was so apparent. And similar things occurred in my life not once, but many times.

Strange as it may seem, but I did not become a nationalist, or join a Jewish community. I loathed local nationalism.

Back in 1953 I could have received my first passport with the registration note "Russian" in it, because an illiterate clerk had forgotten to write down my nationality in my birth certificate. Mother insisted that I should do it, but I refused: "If they hadn't beaten me for my nationality, I would have registered as a Russian. But in the present situation it will look as if I am hiding."

For some time I lived in the Far East. The natives and owners of the land there are Nanaians. I visited their villages, their largest village of Kondon, spoke to fishermen, teachers. I shall always remember the local shaman, a WWII veteran, bearer of several decorations. I shall always remember his son who sang in a beautiful and loud voice Soviet songs, so as to drown his father's incantations. I came to know that Nanaians were indus-

trious and honest people close to nature. But I saw how the newcomers made drunkards of them, and as a result fewer and fewer children were born into Nanaian families. Russian and Ukrainian newcomers called the natives nothing other than "keshka" – a silly nickname.

When I worked in a village in the Gorky region I often heard the local people call the Armenian builders who came to work, there "those blacks." And God save a girl who had an Armenian boyfriend. She would be despised.

Today anti-semitism is openly demonstrated. When in Latvia I had a talk with officials from the Interfront headquarters. They gave two versions of Boris Yeltsin's nationality: either a Mordovian, or a Jew (after his father). In Moscow at the February 22 army self-defence meeting there were banners: "Yeltsin and Co. – servants of Zionism," and "Dissolve the Knesset of the Russian Federation!"

It is evident that nationalism is a very tenaceous thing, and there is not a single nation which by will of God or fate is free from it. What is interesting is the fact that most often nationalism has a theoretical, abstract nature. Everyone knows: "Jews are greedy, cunning, pushing people, who can get anywhere." More often than not my friends "praised" me thus: "You know, you don't behave like a Jew, you're not greedy or cunning, you're just like us. So, you're 'ours.'" And each time they were surprised when I was about to strike them in the face for such "praise."

I am sure that in Armenia and Azerbaijan they first drove away and killed people they did not know personally, and hid their neighbours. Then they started acting according to the appeal: "Ours are being beaten!" This appeal leaves hardly anyone sane. We should have acted before it was issued. We usually take half-measures, relying on the Russian "off-chance." We posed as masters of a compromise, and it led us to civil war. The blood spilled by one's neighbours stays in one's memory for a long time.

Meanwhile we "hot-housed" nationalism by our state policy, by our attitude to individual nationalities, by genocide, by the evident lack of trust in local cadres. Can you explain to me why it was obligatory for each republic to have, besides the first secretary of the Party Central Committee of a local nationality, the second Russian one, who was in constant touch with Moscow's Staraya Ploshchad? Why until recently was it allowed for the Moscow University physics faculty to have annually only one Jewish freshman and only on the condition that he won the first prize in the union physics contest? And why do our small ethnic entities, though having large territories, not have national state autonomy?

Rabochaya tribuna correspondent Bogodelov meditates: the Tyumen region, from the steppe to the tundra, is "my land" and it is so dear to me. "Nowadays they are trying to tear it apart. Deputies from the Yamalo–Nenetsk electoral district gathered in Salekhard to declare their territory a sovereign republic. ...It turns out now that it is no longer my land, but 'foreign territory!'"

I wonder if anybody ever asked the Nentsi whether they wanted their district to be part of the Tyumen region. Did special correspondent Bogodelov ask their permission to call their country "my own land"? I doubt that if Mr Bogodelov were born in France and went to school there he would have insisted on joining Paris to Tobolsk. And, finally, has anybody asked the Nentsi's consent to intrusion into their land, destroying the tender soil of the tundra, polluting the purest water of their rivers?

The Soviet President is upset over the "brain drain" from the USSR. But who leaves the Union? Mostly Jews and Germans. Forty-five years have passed since WWII. But there is still no presidential decree allowing Germans to return to their land, and to restore their republic. Don't we need their industriousness, self-discipline and their skill?

Where is a presidential statement acknowledging the persecution of Jews and declaring that from now on our state will prohibit state anti-semitism and that anti-semitism in everyday life will be punished by law?

Recently in Nizhny Novgorod I saw the inscription "Beat Kikes, save Russia!" again. My great-grandfather and great-great-grandfather were born here. Why should I leave my country? I do not want to and I do not want to be pressed to do it. I shall never understand a state which does not need its citizens.

Vladimir Vyshnepolsky,
Nizhny Novgorod, USSR

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Ethics in politics

Leonid Ionin

One of the most visible and least attractive features of today's political journalism is its moralizing intonation. Moralizing has become fashionable. Here and there we are offered the analysis of moral qualities of a concrete policy, or moral qualities of the leaders who pursue it, instead of real political analysis. Personal likes and dislikes are elevated to political evaluations. The moral faith, the conviction in the righteousness of one's own cause become the main argument. As a result one presents one's political opponents as amoral creatures, thus discrediting their policies. The purity of one's own political faith becomes the factor of paramount importance. In general, the political struggle is acquiring a quasireligious character and becoming a struggle of absolute convictions that afford no compromise. This country has already paid dearly for such a practice and may yet have to pay more.

Examples are numerous. I would like to consider one of them, which seems to be most important. This is "the problem of principles". The right-wingers, i.e., communists, never tire of speaking about the importance of a principled stance, of remaining loyal to the principles, and condemn the defectors. The left-wingers, i.e., democrats who never doubt their absolute political conviction, believe that simple being on their side is moral enough. That is why they encourage the defectors from the right-wing camp. "Join us!" cried Tatiana Ivanova, another regular *New Times* contributor.

As a result, the right-wingers label the defectors traitors, and the left-wingers are completely sure that there are no problems, because even treason is moral if it is treason in their favour. On the other hand, the right-wingers would have behaved exactly the same had there been any defectors from the democratic camp.

What about the defectors themselves, those former Sauls, or, as they are called today, former partocrats? Basically their arguments are similar: "We used to have faith, but we have seen that it was a false faith, that is why we dropped out of the CPSU and switched sides." Actually, it does not sound especially convincing when in the sixth year of perestroika an experienced politician says he has just seen what common people have known for decades, and what has become the knowledge of almost any schoolchild in the past few years. There is no other way to explain the defection, though – after all you can't expect a politician to follow the example of a satirical character, Prisypkin, who thus explained why he decided to abandon his wife for another girl:

"She's nicer and she's sexier
And her breasts swell proudly
Under an exquisite jacket..."

No defectors speak seriously or furnish any political reasons for their step. No defectors say there used to be no political alternative to the CPSU and now that such an alternative is readily availabe, they believe that the democratic camps' policies are more promising and dependable ("she's nicer and she's sexier...")

Evidently, people prefer to keep silent about their real motives out of fear of acquiring the reputation of a calculating cynic. It is difficult, of course, to utter reasonable words in the atmosphere of a general hysteria of moralizing. Sincerity may cost one his career. But such words must be uttered, because the change of political partners has nothing to do with conjugal disloyalty or change of religion, but is a matter of expediency and political responsibility.

Love is one's personal affair. Had Prisypkin ignored "the proud breasts" and stayed loyal to his wife, he would have been great from a moralizer's point of view, but this would have hardly impressed anyone. But if a politician sees new, brighter prospects affecting the lives of millions and continues to pursue his old course, which he finds unpromising himself, he commits a crime against his profession and the people. If necessary, a politician can and must change partners without fearing that some moralizing observers may compare him with Prisypkin.

Religion is also one's personal affair. One can only decide for oneself when it comes to one's religion convictions. Although politics is closely connected with religion, it cannot be equated with religion. That is why people speaking about the change of political views and preferences as the betrayal of political faith, consciously or otherwise, widen the gap between the old followers and the new ones. They promote schism where consolidation is needed. Religious faith is always absolute, while political convictions are flexible and possible to adapt to each other. Almost the same applies to morality: one's conscience is clear when moral commandments are absolutely observed. Any compromise is immoral. However banal it may sound, politics is the art of compromise and coalitions. A policy that admits of no compromises or coalitions is suicidal for leaders and followers alike.

Seventy odd years ago the celebrated German thinker, Max Weber, advanced the idea of two ethics: the ethics of conviction and the ethics of responsibility. The ethics of conviction is the one which is used in religion and which guides people's everyday behaviour. The ethics of responsibility is what a politician must be guided by. The main maxim of the ethics of conviction: do what you must and let God take care of the rest. The main maxim of the ethics of responsibility: act so as to be responsible for the consequences of your actions.

From the viewpoint of the ethics of conviction the most important thing is one's clear conscience which gives one the feeling of one's own moral perfection. If things go wrong, the blame will be on the unfavourable circumstances or on the stupid, dishonest, immoral, etc., people. Such an excuse is not good for serious politicians. A serious politician must take into account both the circumstances and the imperfections of human nature. He must foresee everything and adapt his policy to the changing circumstances by seeking coalitions and compromises. A serious politician assumes responsibility for the foreseeable consequences of his decisions and actions, while a person who lives according to the ethics of conviction can afford to be responsible only for himself, his clear conscience and the purity of his faith.

There have long been rumours of a possible civil war. A civil war in this country can only be a religious war. There are no social reasons for it. The civil war will begin if the advocates of opposing political convictions manage to wrap themselves in the faith in the absolute truth of their views, placing their own moral convictions above all use. The moralizing zeal characteristic of today's politics and journalism is a bad sign, a warning that we are on the wrong road. ■

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If I am for myself, who then is for all?

Perestroika turned out to be a "catastroika" for the weak and socially unprotected, with its daily problems and stresses. How shall we free ourselves from the crisis of consciousness?

Yury Furmanov

Six years after its appearance the word "perestroika" causes mostly negative emotions in the everyday mentality of millions of Soviet people. No wonder! The worsening living conditions of the majority of the population, particularly of the weak and elderly, the situation of universal criticism and internal ideological (and not only ideological) war, political strife, dirty tides of the "shadow" and pseudomarket economy, growth of crime, distressing manifestations of the neglected city services and everyday cynicism in the streets including cases when people empty their bladders right near the booths selling beer, falling life expectancy and rising suicide rate (sometimes the dead bodies in morgues are not removed for weeks), hostilities between formerly "fraternal" peoples, ecological disasters and ecological crimes – these are the symptoms of the present joyless life of the country, a former "superpower" and the bullwark of the new socialist civilization.

While ideologists, politicians, journalists, and scholars go on disputing (brilliantly or otherwise) problems of historical option, of "who is to blame" and "what should be done," the majority of the population is concerned with the only existential topic of "how to live" and "what to hope for" in the situation of options without options, with life becoming unbearable.

"Catastroika"

It is self-evident that the main reason for the crisis mentality in the country is the drastic decline of the already low standard of living – the practically uncontrolled rise of prices, the sharp fall of purchasing power, and the total deficit of commodities. The weak and the least protected strata of the population perceive perestroika as a calamity, as a "catastroika" (catastrophic perestroika), to use Alexander Zinoviev's latest linguistic concoction. Particularly suffering are the elderly people and the "collectivists" who for decades live an untroubled life under the protective umbrella of state socialism without bothering themselves with creating one's own niche for survival. Their faith was finally shaken by the perfidious currency reform and the cruel, by its consequences, price hike. They not only have lost all faith in governmental social protection programmes and in social charity, they are also afraid that with the advent of the market era the funds designed for social protection will turn into a source of financing for the strong, rich, and crafty. Neither do they believe in the possibility of thriving in an honest way, fearing that they will be victims of another large-scale swindle, this time not an ideological, but economic one. Today there are more than enough reasons for these fears. Many thousands of the latter-day preditors camouflaged as businessmen, shamelessly fish out hundreds from the strong and rubles from the weak, taking advantage of total disorder, anarchy, and shortage of goods. Suspicion based on the fear of being cheated seems to have become almost the only attitude of a person outside the doors of his home.

One may be asked whether all this is really so hopeless? Is it possible to deny the achievements of perestroika in the domain of democratization, glasnost, freedom, and human rights? Certainly not. But its historical significance escapes the crisis mentality of millions of people who have been placed by it in the situation of overstrain, interpersonal conflicts, and collective strife. It's not difficult to foresee that its "epoch-making" significance will rapidly disappear from the every-day consciousness if perestroika processes continue in the same vein as during the last two or three years. There is growing opposition to the reforms from "below" where they begin to be perceived as a hostile and destructive force. Until recently many people of most diverse convictions have agreed with Gorbachev that there was no alternative for this country if it wanted to pass from decaying socialism to the ranks of civilized nations. Yet this speculative perspective is fading out because of the growing conviction that we have become hostages of this alternative and that we will have to pay for it with privations and suffering for quite a while.

Those who have proved unable to adjust themselves to the new environment begin to feel nostalgic for the "bright" past which encourages the conservatives from the CPSU. From the point of view of the present situation their position is rather convincing. What has democratization brought to Soviet society? A social anarchy when everybody is right but nobody knows what's to be done? Political rights received from the TV screen? And what has glasnost given us? Political gossip and satisfaction of inquisitiveness which often turns out to be a stress-causing stream of filth? And what about freedom? Isn't it a fig leaf used by shameless people fleecing the poor and robbing the remains of the state property?

Anyway, political conservatives today have a sufficiently strong social base which will doubtless broaden as the crisis mentality spreads. For perestroika has caused the conservatives not only material but also moral damage – it has destroyed for ever the world of collectivist illusions which nourished the soul of an activist and has put him face to face with the grim reality: "The rescue of the drowning is in the hands of the drowning themselves."

After religious atheism

Today the consciousness of half-proletarian masses is facing the choice between collectivism and individualism, having practically no criteria for this kind of choice. The collectivist image has been destroyed while self-assertion as a motive force is too vague a perspective. And how much disappointment has the discovery of the world of Western abundance brought to the Soviet man! It has incited an unprecedented explosion of consumption fetishism in Soviet society without giving it the slightest chance to satisfy its well-grounded grudge.

But, possibly, the most tragic is the fact that under the current pluralism people have for the first time felt the emptiness of their spiritual life. Their consciousness devoid of a religios faith and spiritual neurishment is now suffering from the destruction of socialist illusions including those that came into being during the period of perestroika. The communist faith was a kind of secular religion for the majority. For decades it has rather successfully compensated for the loss of traditional religiosity. In a dispute with Metropolitan Vvedensky, A.V.Lunacharsky called the new faith "religious atheism." The new proletarian religion lured the masses not so much with a promise to create "an earthly paradise", as by the idea of its inevitability which proceeds not from the selective divine will, or arbitrary judgment of an individual, but from the omnipotent laws of history. As for the leaders of the proletariat, they visualized themselves as no more than initiated to the objective course of history, it was exactly this initiation that secured them charismatic power which hundredfold exceeded that of the last Russian Tsar. Even liberal intellectuals, in a touching unity with the masses, glorified socialism. Even such a brilliant aesthete and aristocrat of spirit as Oscar Wilde believed that "under socialism everything will be different, that in the future prosperity and happines will be enjoyed by every member of the society," although he predicted that "if socialism becomes authoritarian... the future of mankind will be much more terrible than it is at present."

Under the roof of state socialism

The dethroning of socialism we are now witnessing is not merely a process of the dismantling of a powerful state ideology, it's also a fall of faith. Whatever the assertions of Western liberals or our halfbaked democrats and "neo-monarchists", the life under the roof of the state socialism and its ideology was rather comfortable. Soviet society isolated from the rest of the world by the "Iron Curtain," lived with the conviction and tried to convince others that ours "is the best of all possible worlds." The scarcity of material life was fully compensated for by the faith in progress, in our having the most progressive regime, the best possible leaders, the incessently prospering state, the best scientists, airplanes, and finally, the best Constitution in the world. Even in the period of Brezhnev's rule we still managed to believe in the power of our state, of our Army, in the indestructibility of our social order, and in the necessity of the difficulties we lived through, because otherwise it would have been still worse, etc.

But even when the ideological faith had outlived itself we again believed in the material miracle of perestroika and, impatient for satiety and contentment, turned its evolutionary logic into a destructive revolution. Because, in accordance with our revolutionary genes the revolutionary is the best.

The downfall of the belief in perestroika means the end of the epoch of socialist beliefs and is fraught with the danger of unguided atheistic consciousness precipitating into the abyss of nihilism and aggressiveness. Attempts to fill the spiritual emptiness with political and nationalist ideas, far from yielding the desired results, create the basis for the still worse – a civil war. Fortunately enough, many people have already begun to understand that political faith is superficial and ephemeral, that exaggerated party feelings worsen, instead of improve, the political situation in the country, and that until politicians stop hating each other for differences in their political creeds, there will be no civil peace.

A riot in the name of hope

People manifest themselves differently in a situation which is best described not as a crisis but as a pre-catastrophe. Suffering from this kind of mentality is the greater part of the society, but far from all. Those who have power, money, connections, or a possibility to go abroad, perceive the negative consequences of perestroika in the smallest degree. Those deprived of faith and illusions, poor of spirit and having no means of subsistence, feel to the fullest how lonely and forsaken they are in the face of present and future possible calamities. But they can't remain long face to face with their fears, stresses, and spiritual emptiness. So where is the way out? In rebelling? In stealing? In forgetting oneself amidst the routine of small deeds? In drunkenness after which sobriety seems hellish? Everything has been tried, yet there is no light at the end of the tunnel. And even if there were, it would be the lights of an approaching train. Probably, I should find another person, the one like myself, with whom to share my troubles and anguish. Maybe, the only thing we both need is to speak out, to yield ourselves to the feeling of a common, hard life and even to try to help each other? Maybe, in this problematic situation altruism is a better strategy for survival than egoism?

One may already observe that fear, disbelief, and the strain of life urge people to create around themselves small communities whose members they may trust and on whose support and recognition they can rely. People begin to create, timidly, spontaneously and apprehensively, their own communities of mutual assitance. These forming and dissolving communities are religious by their very essence, for they are manifestations of sympathy for sufferings and privations of their like. Of course, so far it is a question of a negative religiosity in which there is no positive faith. Maybe, it will soon come? A question difficult to answer. Today all hopes that the Orthodox Church will be able to convert millions of atheists are nil because it needs be reformed itself, it should resolutely rid itself of its dogmatic fence. In the meantime the role of atheist confessors is played by fear instead of the clergy or communists-propagandists. Probably, the only unquestionable achievement of perestroika is that is has compelled many people to think of themselves after decades of untroubled and on the whole confent existence when we were relieved of that duty by "the father of all peoples," or the CPSU, or the "all-people state." Thinking of ourselves, we can't help thinking of others, people like ourselves.

When today we ask ourselves, how perestroika is going to develop, the answer should be looked for not only in economic reforms or domestic politics but in the direction the crisis mentality is to take, because it becomes more and more uncontrolled. Public opinion ceases to be a cover for politicians, it is becoming a real force, destructive or productive. According to Albert Camus, there are two types of rebelliousness: a rebellion of despair and a rebellion of hope. Whereas the first is painfully burdened with the question "What to live for?", the latter turns to the problem "How to live?" It only remains for us to hope that the crisis mentality will choose the second path – the path of hope for a slow convalescence in a situation of peace and concord. But for this to be possible it is imperative to resolutely change many orientations of the present social ideology and psychology and first of all to reject the understanding of human beings as a means of achieving an end, as only a "motive force of perestroika." In the meantime the destructive eruptions of the crisis mentality are only gaining strength in the country, and it's not yet clear how destructive its potential is. And may God relieve us and the neighbouring countries of this knowledge.

YUGOSLAVIA

The new dimensions of the crisis

The Yugoslavian crisis is assuming a new dimension – an international one. It is as evident in the character of the participants as in the possible consequences. Moreover, a stable peace in Yugoslavia is still far off and the danger of a sharp intensification is a reality

What frightens Europe?

Not the least of worries is the fear that new escalation of the bloodshed in the neighboring country will inevitably increase the stream of refugees. Their number may reach a million people. Moreover, several European states are afraid that the "value" of the Yugoslavian experience of "resolving" its nationalities problem might prove attractive to others. The danger also exists that the reshaping of borders will not stop at Yugoslavia. It is reckoned that if the Yugoslavian example turns out to be infectious, doubt will be cast on close to twenty European borders.

It is understood that European governments are uneasy when toungues of flame burst forth from the long smouldering corner of inter-Yugoslavian conflict. They have decided to take action. First an attempt was made to settle the conflict within the framework of the common European process. But its mechanisms, on just the first go round, turned out to be ineffective. Calls for peace and reason failed.

Then the European community really got down to work on the problem. It was as if all were agreed on the necessity of its intercession – in Yugoslavia and beyond its borders. Difficulties arose concerning the definition of the optimal paths of influence. Several European countries (and Germany takes the lead in this group) think that Europe must "show its teeth," "impose sanctions," and if necessary resort to armed force. Others suggest restrained action: to mediate and to address the appeals, to combine political and economic pressure. There is a lack of unity about another question as well: should the European community take sides with the Yugoslavian republics or should it remain a neutral arbiter?

Today, after almost two months of armed conflict, voices are starting to be heard about

the inability of the EC to unwind the tangle of Yugoslavian contradictions. European politicians increasingly frequently become offended, lamenting the impossibility that the Southern slavs will see reason, and suggesting that others take up the Yugoslavian puzzle. The UN Security Council, for example.

It seems that the failure of the EC's efforts can be explained in several ways. First of all, there's the differing degree of interest in outside help among the major participants in the Yugoslavian crisis. Slovenia and Croatia assert that without Europe's arbitration and the presence of foreign troops, there will not be a successful solution to the crisis. They use every new victim and every aborted truce as an argument to support their position.

Serbia is much more restrained with regard to the allocation in "hot spots" of foreign observers, and especially soldiers. Its position is clear enough: Croatia proclaimed separation from

Yugoslavia without seeking agreement from the several hundred thousand Serbs who live there. It came to be that the conservation of the arisen situation would be in the hands of Croatia.

Serbia's position is influenced by the persistant calls of several members of the EC to recognize Slovenia and Croatia as soon as possible. On the one hand, this would indicate that Europe gives up Yugoslavia, with whom hundreds of agreements were concluded. On the other hand, in the event of the recognition of an independent Croatia, Serbia's support of the demands of the Serbs living in Croatia, would be regarded as interference in internal affairs or even as aggression. And thus, military action would be a real possibility.

Today, the possibility of sending foreign troops to Yugoslavia is being discussed more often: well, if they didn't want observers they would have to deal with soldiers. But the only foreign troops which can legally enter Yugoslavia are the "blue helmets of the UN." But for them to enter the country two conditions must be met: the consent of all the permanent members of the Security Council, and the request of the Yugoslavians themselves. Neither of these conditions can be considered practicable today.

It is alarming, however, that not just journalists but also high ranking politicians have of late frequently stated that instead of UN troops, West European forces could be used, and that their deployment in Yugoslavia would not necessarily have to be approved by the central government – a request by one of the "independent republics" would be sufficient. In this case, the dispatching of troops to Yugoslavia would have the same "legality" as the dispatching of Soviet troops to Afghanistan "at the request of a fraternal government. And, doubtless, the same unhappy consequences would result.

Gennady Sysoyev,
our own correspondent

BELGRADE

In search of a lost balance

In the first day of the Yugoslavian crisis the Soviet Union was very restrained. It seemed that it was trying to stay away from the events which upset both the political circles and the public of Europe. This position taken by the superpower without whose participation (as in the past without the participation of the Russian Empire) nothing happened in the Balkans, was for many unexpeced. But no matter how it looked, it did have its political sense.

First, after the disintegration of the Eastern block and the reconciliation to the political and military departure from Eastern Europe, it could be reasonably supposed that Moscow is not going to show particular interest in preserving its position in the region where Yugoslavia is located.

Secondly, in accordance with the new thinking in Soviet foreign policy and the decisive departure from old practices, when the Soviet Union considered itself called upon to interfere in the affairs of any country where socialism was endangered, it was logical for Gorbachev to "allow" the Yugoslavian peoples themselves to find a way out of the crisis.

Thirdly, it is reasonable to consider that the USSR would try to avoid an undesirable conflict with the USA and leading European countries on any political matter, and the events in Yugoslavia have come to be regarded as such.

Finally, it can be supposed that the Soviet Union is busy enough with its own political, economic, ethnic, and other problems that it simply does not have the time or the strength to become seriously involved in the problems and destinies of others. All of these reasons for the restrained position of the Soviet Union in the early stages of the development of the Yugoslavian crisis could be considered legitimate today, if the Soviet Union had not recently, and almost pointedly, indicated that it does not intend to remain a passive observer of the events in Yugoslavia. How can this "change" be explained?

In the development of all the negotiating processes between the USSR and the USA, and now with the West as a whole, two stages can be singled out. In the first stage, for all of Gorbachev's pragmatism, Soviet foreign policy had a clearly visible and significant dose of "idealism," a naive belief that the end of the confrontation between the blocs would in and of itself bring into being a new world and European order in which would reign the complete harmony of the interests of all the actors and partners. This, as is well known, did not happen.

In the second stage, during the course of which two important historical events occurred – the unification of Germany and the Gulf War, the Soviet Union began to look more realistically at international events, and of course, at what it was losing and what others were gaining. The unification of Germany was accepted by Moscow as fact accompli, but during the War in the Gulf, for all its desires not to ruin the good relations with the US and the West the USSR attempted to conduct policies, expressing its specific interests in that important political and strategic military region.

With regard to these changes, let us try to present the reasons which led the Soviet Union to distance itself from the role of an onlooker in the solution of the Yugoslavian crisis. It seems that the significant changes in the Soviet Union's position were effected because a few European countries tried openly to subordinate the solution of the Yugoslavian crisis to their own specific interests and to use it to increase their own presence and influence in the region. Such an approach was obviously unacceptable to the Soviet Union.

It was unacceptable first of all from the point of view of the Soviet understanding of a "common European home," in which a neighbour does not use the misfortune of another neighbour for his own gain, and the interests of one cannot be satisfied at the expense of another, of the stronger at the expense of the weaker.

As far as one can judge, the Soviet Union did not want to look on while in the region, where it for a long time played the role of an important political factor, several European countries "entrenched themselves" and tried to achieve goals similar to those they pursued during the Second World War. Finally, Soviet politics obviously proceeds from the assumption that there are many parallels between the development of the crises in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. In spite of the all the differences, the forms and means for the possible "dismantling" Yugoslavia might serve as a model for the analogous "dismantling" of the USSR in the future.

Bearing all this in mind, it is not hard to understand why the Soviet Union in its negotiations with President Bush, in its official statements, in the demarches sent to different countries, at meetings in the framework of the common European process clearly stated its support for the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia as a fundamental principal, upon which the current legal order is based. The Soviet Union wants the Yugoslavian people themselves to peacefully and democratically, in accordance with the common European ideals and the demands of the times, decide the question of the future system of their country.

From this position logically follows the wish of the USSR that the countries of the European community in their efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement to the crisis do not cross the fine line which separates constructive and benevolent help and support from direct interference in the domestic affairs of Yugoslavia.

The Yugoslavians, in whom is inherent no small degree of haughtiness in addition to the predilection for ignoring everyone and everything, hardly noticed the original absence of the USSR from the circle of countries showing interest in the development of the Yugoslavian crisis at its outset. It must be said that they are not well enough aware of the meaning of the new position of the Soviet Union as an important factor of balance in the region and of a peaceful settlement in Yugoslavia.

Ranko Petkovic,
Yugoslavian publicist

Technotron revolutionaries

Evgeny Rusakov,
our own correspondent

A businessman speaking over a miniature telephone as he walks is today a common sight in the streets of Manhattan. A common-size receiver with an aerial smaller than a pencil is a no less, if not more important sign of the transformation of America than huge new skyscrapers.

A modern "smart" telephone connects a businessman via satellite with Los Angeles or London, stores numbers in its memory, dials other telephones, and carries out other operations.

Incidentally, new skyscrapers also incorporate the latest in technology. The computers and monitors installed in them maintain the temperature at each floor, protect the building, indicate the position of the elevators at a given moment, keep a record of people who enter flats or offices, show the latest stock exchange news along with the calendar of sports and cultural events in the city.

One need not go to the bank to draw money from his account or make a deposit. Cash machines have been set up on almost every corner. It is enough to insert your bank card into such a machine, punch in the five-letter or five-digit code known only to the client and the computer, and then give several commands by touching the tiny buttons of the machine.

"Smart" chips

As often happens in the history of mankind, two breakthroughs which brought about a revolution in the life of society remained almost unnoticed at the time by the public and the media. While newspapers, especially the *Wall Street Journal,* and even television programmes are today inundated with news from the computer world, the designing of a large-scale integrated circuit by the American company Intel in 1971 did not evoke an outburst of emotions.

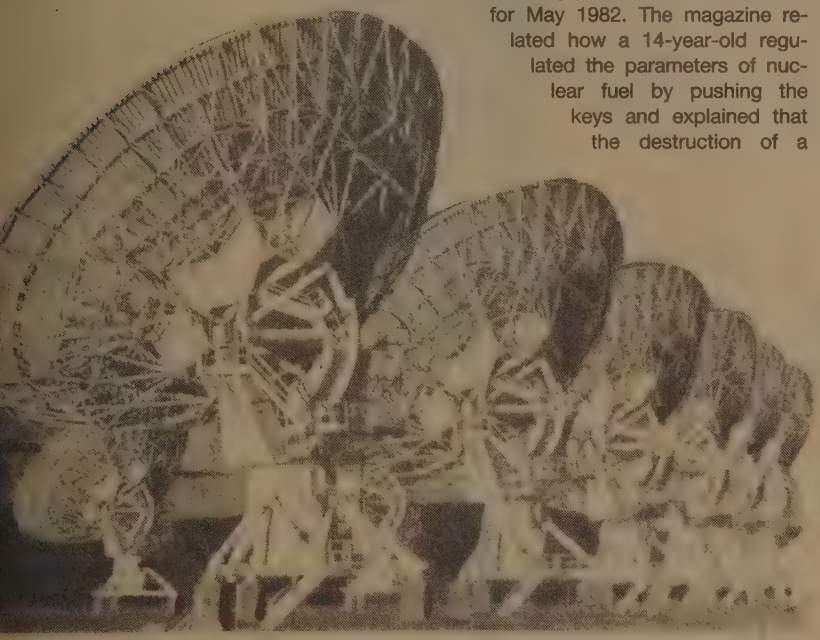
A tiny silicon chip which contains thousands of electronic circuits – the "brain" of a computer – laid the foundation for devising the fourth generation of electronic computers and signified a revolution in the relationship between man and computers. A chip – a miniature cheap microprocessor – found broad application in the 1980s. It is used in the manufacture of telephones, irons, watches, thermostats, microwave ovens, copying and washing machines, replaces the carburettor in a car, drives a car through the streets of a city after the pattern of a cruise missile, reduces the amount of exhaust gas, and even "educates" the driver by refusing to start the engine if he violates one of the rules of the road by drinking before setting out. The Adidas company manufactures sneakers in which a tiny electronic "brain" records the speed of a runner, the distance covered by him and even the amount of calories he expends.

In an information society, the strategic resource is your brains

No interest was originally shown in the invention of two boys with the same name Steve. It was an ideal cooperation between technology and business. One of the two Steves – Wozniak – was a gifted technician who felt by intuition the great potential inherent in a microprocessor. Just for fun he assembled a small easy-to-handle computer in his garage. The other Steve – Jobs – was not very good with computers, but he had the qualities of an entrepreneur. He did everything in his power to obtain loans and ensure the manufacture of goods in a shape convenient for and attractive to consumers. Many of his suggestions found application in the output of personal computers. For in-

stance, he suggested that the metal traditionally used for frames and keyboards be replaced with light and attractive plastic.

The first market variant of a personal computer appeared on sale in 1977. Jobs called it the Apple 2 in memory of his work in apple orchards during vacations. At first, the Apple 2 did not create a furor. But in 1981 IBM produced its first personal computer. The press and television were soon filled with enthusiastic comments on the microcomputer revolution. Leading magazines carried pictures of both Steves on their covers while *Time* chose a personal computer as the machine of the year instead of its traditional man of the year.



The computer has at last appeared in homes, schools, shops, and enterprises. The first generations of electronic computers penetrated into many spheres of life. Even in the Soviet Union the central government issued a decision on the introduction of automatic control systems in 1971. However, all-round computerization began only with the spread of microprocessors and personal computers in the 1980s.

During my previous visit to the United States, personal computers were rare and cumbersome, like Soviet TV sets in the early 1950s. The first video cassette recorders had just appeared on the market. Today, 12 years later, two thirds of Americans have them. Before the Apple 2 went into quantity production there were only half a million computers in the country. Today the United States has more than 50 billion personal computers alone. Everyone, old and young, even children, have become captives of computers. With their aid Americans keep the family budget, pay their bills, order food or theatre tickets straight from home, book seats for a plane, follow the rates of shares on the stock exchange, buy or sell shares through brokers, write and type (I can confirm from my own experience that it is more convenient and effective), write novels, and even compose music.

Electronic computers teach schoolchildren and future pilots. In one of the New Jersey schools children studied a program showing the operation of a nuclear reactor. The training process was described by *Time* in one of its issues for May 1982. The magazine related how a 14-year-old regulated the parameters of nuclear fuel by pushing the keys and explained that the destruction of a reactor can be avoided by means of increasing its power to the maximum. Alarming red figures suddenly appeared on the screen. The girl explained that the reactor was overloaded and its capacity was falling. There were faults in the active zone and the reactor melted down. The 14-year-old schoolgirl deliberately created an emergency situation. But it was not a simulation of the Chernobyl tragedy, as it might seem at first glance. If our self-confident engineers from the institute which had undertaken an experiment and engineers from the Chernobyl atomic power plant had also been given instruction in computer classes, the Chernobyl disaster with its global consequences might not have occurred.

Electronic computers have transformed work in banks and corporations. Neither a typist nor president of a company can do without them today. Several million people have left their offices and carry out work for their companies on computers at home. The computerization of offices began in Washington in the early 1980s.

Though the first robot appeared at a General Motors plant back in 1961, automated shops continued to remain islands in the sea of manual labour almost till the 1980s. Only with the appearance of fourth- and fifth-generation computers did robots and all machines become so sophisticated that fully automated factories can now be built. At such a factory all operations, from the planning, financial calculations and the designing of products to their delivery to consumers, are connected in one circuit. Electronic computers control robots which produce components, assemble and pack large motor vehicles and tiny plates. General Motors has invested and continues to invest tens of millions of dollars in these new flexible technologies which are known here as comprehensive automated production. Such production can be quickly adapted to consumer demands and economic conditions. It substantially reduces production costs, overhead charges and inevitable loss of time, quality, and so on.

In the early 1980s American companies, concerned about competition, especially from the Japanese, began to invest huge sums in high technology. In the 1970s I happened to visit steel plants which were not very advanced in comparison with our blast and open-hearth furnaces. The "industry of smoking chimneys" is receding into the past. Steel and motor vehicles are produced in a modern way – more cheaply, more efficiently, under the vigilant eye of computers.

With the restructuring of industry on the basis of science-intensive production, new technologies assumed an explosive-like character when a drastic change in one branch quickly spreads to other branches, producing an ever greater effect. The technological and economic revolutions seem to have merged. The checking of inflation, encouragement of enterprise and tax privileges have given business a full scope of actions. On the other hand, the restructuring of industry helped to eliminate one of the main causes of inflation, namely, the declining rate of growth of labour productivity.

The production of computers and accessories for them remains the locomotive of the economy. Slumps were recorded in this branch, too. Apple and other computer-producing companies

are compelled to dismiss workers. However, this does not belittle their phenomenal successes.

Thus, silicon has transformed the face of America and the West as a whole. True, great skill is needed to produce "super-smart" ships from it.

"Information" revolution?

The talk about a new technological revolution began almost 20 years ago. Suffice it to recall Zbigniew Brzezinski's book on the "era of electronics" published back in 1970. However, only forecasts and conjectures were made at the time. It was only it the early 1980s that the outlines of a new era in the history of mankind became visible, and it has become obvious only now that it can bring about the same radical change in the life of man as the agricultural and industrial revolutions.

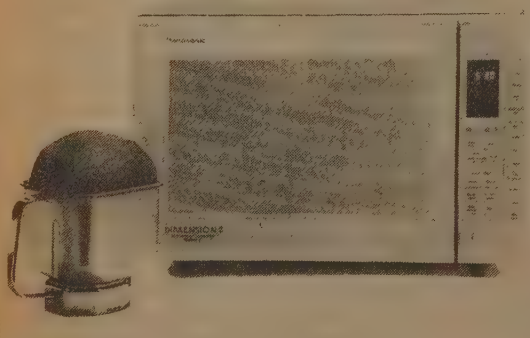
The first neolithic revolution which began about 10,000 years ago with the transition from gathering edibile plants and hunting to the cultivation of agricultural crops and the domestication of animals, led to the appearance of civilization – a complex community of people, a state, a written language, art, and philosophy. The second revolution produced machine civilization, an assembly line, means of communication and mass annihilation. Having passed through the agony of totalitarianism it led to the triumph of democracy and a regulated market economy.

Grain, ploughs, and domestic animals played the same part in the first revolution as steel, oil, and machines in the second one. Information becomes the substance of the third revolution. The information revolution seems to be the right name, though time will show what is implied by information in the broad sense of the word and who should be included in the information sector.

In the opinion of local sociologists, about two thirds of the labour force in the United States is now employed in the gathering, storing, processing, and using information. It is three times the number of "blue collar" workers. True, the above-mentioned figure includes bank employees, engineers, scientists, teachers, journalists, secretaries, and even civil servants.

Information technology has penetrated widely into diverse fields. What – besides the classical unity of place, time, and action – do a TV journalist reporting on air raids on Baghdad and missiles exploding before his eyes have in common? They are united by information technology – microprocessors, TV screens, and space via which the journalist maintains communication and from which maps for guiding "smart" missiles at targets were photographed.

It seems that the information society will be able to unite ever new technologies from computers, fibre-optics communication, and space vehicles to biotechnology, lasers, and composite materials. Some of them have already been connected for ever while others are on the way to it. A firm alliance has formed between communication and computers which have made communication "smart." In its turn, communication has united computers into local and even global networks. Computer communications allow people to operate huge amounts of shares at stock exchanges at home and abroad, hold debates on nuclear policy and local self-government, and even indulge in fantasies on sexual themes.



The economy and social life have become global. At the same time, there are signs of the transition from the mass to the individual, from predominant centralism to flexible decentralization. Those of our ideologists who clearly see the West's integrating experience and overlook all the rest can be likened to a blind man who feels the trunk of an elephant and thinks that it is a rope or a tree.

In the opinion of American futurologist John Naisbitt, "in an information society, the strategic resource is your brains, your intelligence, information. So when the strategic resource is information and brain rather than capital, access to the economic system is much easier. That's why we're seeing a fantastic entrepreneurial revolution with new companies being formed."

What will the information revolution bring to us?

On the one hand, the general state of affairs is cheerless. We have only a hundredth of the computers which the Americans have. The computer illiteracy of our society is appalling. It appears that the world's "most advanced" society is terribly behind the United States.

On the other hand, we have considerably more brains than capital in hard currency. If, as some American sociologists believe, the Soviet Union can enter a new world without increasing steel production on primitive open-hearth furnaces, then not everything is lost for our children and grandchildren. True, one "little" thing is needed for our transformation. We have first to survive...

The United States has traversed a difficult road of transformation, and there is no firm guarantee of a "bright road ahead." Japan and a united Europe are now on the heels of the United States in the main field of battle. However, the Americans are constantly ready to meet the challenges of the time. This is a normal state of society. Otherwise it would be in a state of stagnation.

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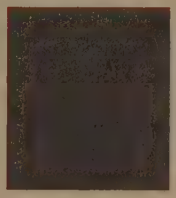

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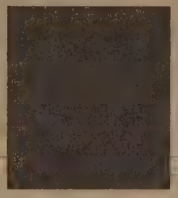

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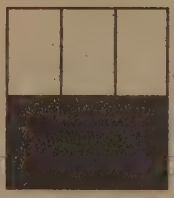

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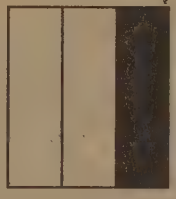

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Party membership card: a two-way ticket?

There are dances and songs in the square near the mausoleum from which Georgy Dimitrov's mummy was removed last year to be given a Christian burial. Young musicians who have nowhere to play request that the large building of the former headquarters of the Bulgarian Communist Party (renamed Socialist) be handed over to them. Shrill voices strike against blind eyes – the blank windows of the party house covered with plywood after last year's arson.

The walls of the emptied mausoleum are covered with inscriptions the most innocent of which do not testify to sympathy for Communists. Yet nowadays the residents of Sofia have much more reason for standing reverently before the mausoleum coated with white stone from Vratsca. Sitting on its tribune where previously moon-like faces under identical hats were exhibited to marching columns of working people, are local girls with breath-taking legs, the girls who don't recognize any fashions except mini-skirts.

Yet, in spite of all the passions involved, the political strife in the Balkan Peninsula seems a bit less severe than in our country, although President Zhelyu Zhelev formulates the principal task of the society in the way common to the whole of Eastern Europe – "overcoming communism."

Communists today

Alexander Lilov, Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Bulgarian Socialist Party, and Andrei Lukanov, his deputy, are no doubt the strongest politicians in present-day Bulgaria. Is it possible, nevertheless, that before long they will have to retire from political activity?

Lilov and Lukanov have similar destinies. Both were quickly promoted up the administrative ladder in Zhivkov's Bulgaria, both quarrelled with the boss, fell out of favour and resumed the leadership of the country after November 10, 1989, when Zhivkov was dismissed. Both were members of the Political Bureau – Lilov in the capacity of the Secretary of the Central Committee for ideology and Lukanov in that of Chairman of the Council of Ministers. Lilov was considered an ideological liberal and a patron of the arts and Lukanov – a first-rank economist of European standing. They headed the country for a brief moment and were once again put aside.

Bulgaria is the only East European country where the Communist Party persisted, didn't split, didn't fall asunder. Before the elections scheduled for September it still boasts the majority in parliament and has enough ministers in Popov's coalition government.

It's true that Andrei Lukanov believes that "the Bulgarian Socialist Party cannot be considered the heir to the Communist Party in terms of ideology."

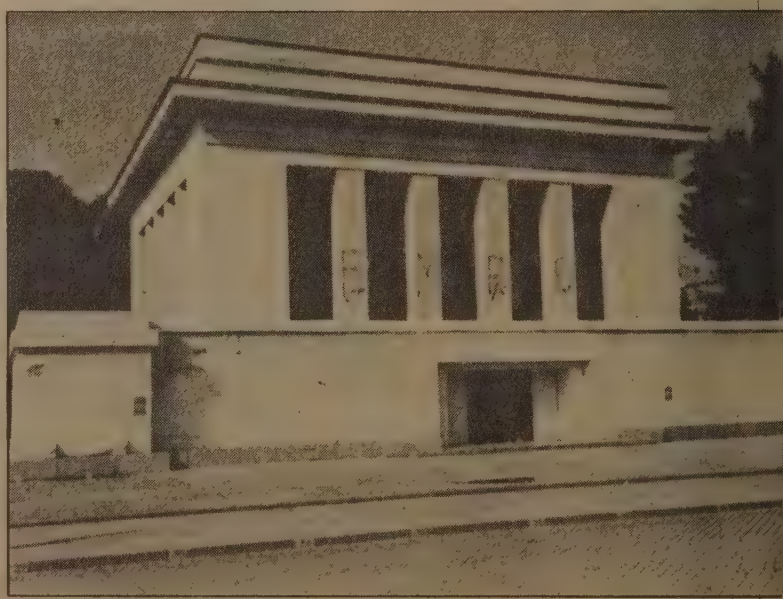
Communists no longer want to be called Communists. They want to be Socialists, Social-Democrats, or simply Democrats. Unfortunately, in a small country everybody knows one another, and one's past is not forgiven

"By changing its name we have changed the essence of the party," he told me. "We have abandoned all that made the contents of the doctrine of BCP and accepted all ideas of a socialist party of democratic stance. Our party is a hundred years old and it was created as a socialist party and it is these ideas that we return to."

But not many trust the name change. Lilov's and Lukanov's comrades-in-arms are still dubbed Communists, and this word has a pejorative connotation. Nevertheless, they expect to win up to one third of the votes in the forthcoming elections.

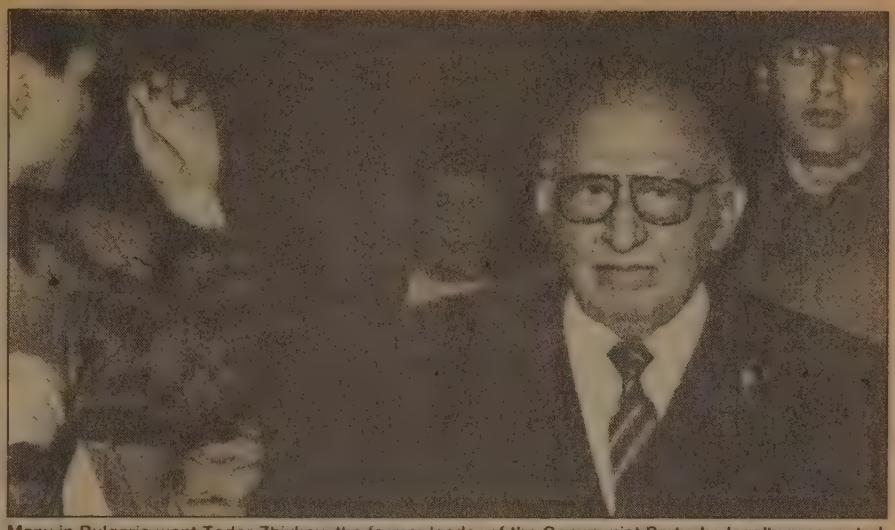
"Our party has always been a reputable participant in the political life of the country," explains Andrei Lukanov. "This fact cannot be erased from the historical records. It used to win one fourth of the popular vote in the 1920s. When Bulgaria was liberated from fascism the CP was the strongest party in the country... It initiated reforms two years ago not because it was urged by the multitudes who filled the streets, but because it had realized the necessity of this step. What in other East European countries has been reached by the opposition, here has been accomplished by the party itself..."

In the previous elections the opposition won the cities to its side. The countryside supported the Communists. In Sofia the following explanation of the phenomenon is suggested. When the Communists came to power in Eastern Europe after the



The walls of the emptied mausoleum are covered with anticommunist slogans

war Bulgaria was the poorest country in the region. In Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia the years of socialism caused a constant underdevelopment as compared to the European standard, whereas in Bulgaria they were years of progress. The Communists somewhat improved the situation in the village, peasants began to receive pensions, their children began studying in universities and making careers. TVsets, refrigerators, cars, and other attributes of civilization began to appear in Bulgarian villages, as though at the party's command. The party propagandists told the villagers that if the party goes the opposition will take away pensions, and the land will have to be returned to its former owners.



Many in Bulgaria want Todor Zhivkov, the former leader of the Communist Party, be legally prosecuted. Others are afraid that subsequently all Communists will be prosecuted

Andrei Lukanov explains the party tactics thus:

"The transition to market relations is connected with the necessity of rejecting some of the so-called social achievements which the people used to consider eternal. Differentiation in property holding, instability and unemployment – all these give certain advantages to the party which strives for a reasonable combination of market and social guarantees."

Has the Party preserved its influence in the army, the state security bodies, and the police?

"The army and the law were departified a year ago. Creation of party cells there is legally prohibited. It is in the interest of our party that they do not transfer their convictions to the sphere of their professional activity."

This is a very provident position whose advantages have not yet been realized by the CPSU leadership. The idea of a trial of Communists, of vengeance on the parties which brought the nation and society to the brink of disaster is current throughout Eastern Europe.

Who is responsible and for what?

Andrei Lukanov answers coolly:

"Everyone who lived in those times is responsible, because by their submissiveness they allowed society to be what it was. Lately I stopped responding to my critics. I spent a lot of effort on it in the hope that logic and facts had some importance for them, yet I found that it was no use appealing to their powers of reason. They have nothing to accuse me of. For instance, I am held responsible for Bulgaria's large foreign debt. If these people had wanted to know the truth they could have easily found out that in the Politburo I spoke for a limitation of imports, for altering prices and the customs policies. Zhivkov decided differently, so what there is my fault?"

It is not Todor Zhivkov alone who is responsible for the difficult situation in Bulgaria. The society may bring moral, not criminal accusations against its former bosses.

"In the 1950s and 1970s the country developed normally on the whole. The life of the people was improving. The aid extended by the Soviet Union and the CMEA integration programmes played a stabilizing role. Everything has begun to collapse since the beginning of the 1980s. You should realize that under the communists a considerable stratum of the nation was quite well off and now these people are nostalgic for the past."

The life was so good that till the mid–1980s there was no dissident movement in Bulgaria.

"The regime in Bulgaria, although unequaled in terms of absolutism, was far from the cruelest in Eastern Europe. Zhivkov is not to be underrated, he was the last politician of the Byzantine type. By far smarter than Ceausescu, he realized that the humiliation of the people would not remain unavenged. The appearance of a dissident movement was hindered by the effective measures which, in the parlance of the secret police, are referred to as preventive. But these were combined with a flexible policy towards the intelligentsia which was granted various privilegies – ranging from the right to leave the country freely to honorary titles and high fees...

The same opinion is shared by Alexander Lilov, the leader of the Socialist Party.

"The 1970s were not so bad for Bulgaria, especially as far as cultural development was concerned, although this was not necessarily thanks to me. This was the time of a boom in translating activities, when Bulgaria became acquainted with contemporary literature. It's another matter that the reforms of socialism were delayed by some 20 or 30 years. The killing of the "Prague Spring" deprived socialism of a chance to survive in history. And nowadays I do not fear anticommunism as much as the intolerance swelling up in society, which brings to mind the previous totalitarianism."

But who is to blame for the state of morale in the country if not the former Central Committee secretary of ideology?

The telephone was silent, the friends turned their backs

"Yes, I am to blame. But we have all evolved, both ourselves and the party. And we are radically changing, accommodating ourselves to the new realities."

What is the Socialist Party like? A merely renamed Communist Party which hopes to survive in this way?

"There are many trends within the party, both orthodox and social democratic ones."

Does this mean that the party is progressing towards social democracy?

"I believe it's too primitive to be oriented towards the Social Democrats alone. The entire experience of world progress should be taken into consideration. Willy Brandt told me once that the social democracy needed renovation too, it needed a search for the answers to the questions which the XXIst century is going to ask. It's the easiest to accept a ready-made pattern, it's much more difficult to shed the dead skin and to emerge really rejuvenated."

It's hardly possible to forget the past quickly. The Bulgarian Socialist Party resembles the CPSU in that it's also a conglomeration of heterogeneous trends, including absolutely antisocialist

ones, and at the same time it's a large multitude of people who are not concerned with any ideas whatsoever. For various reasons they remain in the party watching with fear the changes in society; their state is best described as "frustration." Manoeuvring between different trends, Alexander Lilov avoids calling the party Social Democratic. Moreover, such a party already exists in Bulgaria and Lilov wants to have a party of his own.

After November 10, 1989, Lilov returned to politics because after six years of disfavour he was full of unused energy.

"I returned because a unique opportunity to take part in the renovation of the country presented itself. I couldn't have shunned the challenge."

And if Zhivkov hadn't ousted you from the Politburo?

"...He would have removed me in a year, anyway. Our differences had been too serious. I insisted on the necessity of reforming Marxism."

When, in our country, a person happened to be dismissed from a lofty position he found himself in a vacuum. People shunned him. Are the morals different in Bulgaria?

"The ways of Bulgarian society are the same as yours. Injustice always takes a heavy toll on a person. When the phone becomes silent and your acquaintances cease to recognize you, there remains only one refuge – your family. My wife, children, and friends saved me. I went and found a job in a research institute and took a great interest in the work."

Don't you regret the major part of your life having been spent on climbing the steep ladder of the party nomenclature?

"Sure! But I believed in what we were doing."

He who travelled third class

"The Socialist Party had better leave the scene. But the alternative to the former Communists is not encouraging either," said the chief secretary of the Union of Bulgarian Journalists, Alexander Angelov.

The opposition to the Red is made of the Blue. The opposition is highly heterogeneous. Formerly existing parties revived, headed by their former leaders who had been repressed but survived. Former functionaries of the Komsomol, failures of the by-gone regime, those who travelled third class but dreamt of the first, are eager to join them. There are many former Communists in the opposition, the sincerity of their new speeches is dubious. Bulgaria is a small country, where everybody knows one another and laughs when he sees, for instance, a former teacher of the history of the party in a militia school declaring himself a Christian Democrat. Of course, the elderly people who have served their time under Communists enjoy more trust.

A certain disappointment in those who personified the opposition (with the exception of Zhelyu Zhelev, other prominent Bulgarian intellectuals remained outside politics) didn't diminish the enmity towards Communists. The leaders of the opposition parties with whom I met in Sofia eagerly spoke of the Bulgarian Socialist Party drawing the most dreadful picture of the country's future in case this party persists.

The left oppositionists have it that the BSP may survive if it rids itself of all Stalinists and joins the Social Democrats. The right-wingers of the Blue formulate the matter differently: Communists should leave the political scene.

The only factor consolidating the opposition is the struggle against Communists, the BSP, the former state power. This greatly resembles the developments in our country.

The BSP has left the CPSU far behind – realism and the instinct of self-preservation of Communists in Sofia made them act quickly. Yet very few trust in the regeneration of the Communist Party, they rather consider the processes taking place in the BSP a mimicry. The explicitness of the Roman senator Cato is at home in the political discussions in the Balkans: the opposition insists that the former Communist Party must be destroyed.

This may seem to be an injustice. For instance, those same Lilov and Lukanov are far superior to their opponents. Many are the members of the former Communist Party who don't recognize any guilt. They lived in a manner which was the only possible one in that state – unconditionally accepting all the rules of the game. Moreover, the political figures of the opposition do not resemble knights without fear and reproach.

It goes without saying that the society needs a left-wing party. But it should be a Labour, Socialist, or a Social Democratic party which will fit the process of democratization, they told me in Sofia.

Nevertheless, the attacks on the former Communist Party are more than a mere manifestation of political struggle, more than a desire to get even for the past humiliation, to say out loud all that had to be kept secret. Preservation of the former Communist Party with all its structures, with its cadres that it has implanted throughout the country, with the influence it exerts on a certain section of the population hampers the development of Bulgaria. On the one hand, it impedes the reforms, on the other, it still fills the countrymen with a kind of fear – the experience of the 45 postwar years is not so easily forgotten. Yet today this is the only party which has a strong and well-developed infrastructure, and however impossible it might seem, a fear of revenge on the part of the offended and aggrieved Communists so far does not vanish.

Leonid Mlechin
SOFIA

Photos by the author and from Time (USA)

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A pledge of silence

Describing the conflicts between the Soviet Union and the Third World was not allowed, unless the frictions resulted in breaking off relations. From the point of view of the Soviet leadership this policy of silence was fully justified. Once a massive campaign of abuse aimed at Soviet people was unleashed in Egypt on the initiative of President Gamal Abdel Nasser. Soviets posted in Egypt were baited, sometimes literally stoned. Obeying strict instructions, our people kept silent and swallowed the insults, trying to be patient.

However, in some cases people were driven to the point when their human dignity rebelled against the official instructions. A Soviet citizens would retaliate against the abuse or rush to help his compatriots. In such cases on returning to the USSR people were required to sign a written pledge of silence about what had happened. This in fact legalized ill-treatment and abuse of Soviets: people whom their own state did not allow to complain or protest would put up with anything.

I have recently talked to experts from the Soviet Foreign Ministry. They were unanimous when they tried to assure me that nothing special happened in Somalia in 1977. The relations indeed soured, but Soviet citizens were evacuated in a peaceful atmosphere within 48 hours. And all the talk about a Soviet Marines expedition to rescue them was nothing but fabrication.

Probably the pledge of silence is still effective. Or perhaps the diplomats decided that such a publication would not be specially conducive to greater understanding between the USSR and Somalia.

The materials of this article are by no means intended to discredit the people of Somalia. The only purpose of this publication is to give due credit to the courage of people who were instructed to keep silent and about whom society soon forgot. It is also another sign of glasnost.

Dmitry Zgersky

The participants in this drama have kept silent for fourteen years. The Somalian dictator Siad Barre launched a persecution campaign against the Soviets posted in Somalia. While Moscow "studied the situation," Soviet Marines came to the rescue...

Somalia's three foes: the the Ethiopian province of Ogaden (shaded below), the Cuban military presence (light stars), the Soviet military presence (dark stars). The northern part of Ethiopia under the Eritrean rebels' control (shaded above). This was the context of the Berbera (northern Somallia) and Mogadiscio evacuation

The view from the sea

Admiral **Mikhail KHORONOPULO,** now the Commander of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet.

"At that time I commanded a larger landing ship *50 let shefstva VLKSM*. We were based in the northern Somalian port of Berbera, the Gulf of Aden.

"On November 13, 1977, President Siad Barre declared that all Soviet citizens were to leave Somalia until November 20. In addition the Somalian leadership declared that it would confiscate all Soviet property in the territory of Somalia. I immediately informed the centre that it was necessary to mount an evacuation mission. The centre tongue-lashed me for spreading panic, and ordered that I work out a gradual evacuation plan intended for the period of up to the end of the year. I worked out such a plan and sent it to the centre. On November 14 the centre ordered the plan revised. One more day was lost in the useless routine. It was only on November 16 that I received the order to sail for Mogadiscio without delay.

"The ship under my command was a new one and it easily sailed as fast as fifteen knots. However, during the eight-month service in southern seas her keel was heavily laden with shells and algae. There was no time to lose: the voyage from Berbera to Mogadiscio would take four days. I used navigator's maps to draw the optimal course with the use of friendly currents. We arrived at the port of Mogadiscio on the very last day of the ultimatum – at noon, November 20. Since the Somalian authorities were not exactly courteous vis-à-vis Soviet representatives, I did not bother to ask for permission to enter the port. There was also a Soviet transport vessel in the port – she was not allowed to berth to start loading Soviet property: the Somalian authorities said there was no Soviet property to load, everything belonged to Somalia. We refused to honour this statement. I deployed the Marines. As soon as the first amphibious party of Marines appeared on shore, the situation changed dramatically. Insults stopped being hurled at Soviet citizens and no one dared to interfere with the loading of property onto the transport vessel."

Anatoly KOROLYOV, officer of the Soviet Marine Corps. (It was impossible

to contact him personally, but his friends related his story to me.)

"There was a wall of crates containing the Soviet property the Somalian government had decided to confiscate on the shoreline. Armed people were deployed on an elevation behind the crates. Some of the Soviet specialists and their family members were on the strip of land in front of the crates along the berth line. The rest were at the Mogadiscio airport. They had already spent two or three days in that strip of land under the tropical sun. They were afraid to leave the strip, because the Somalians ocassionally fired on the crates. People were really desperate. When amphibious crafts came to their rescue, women were crying, and one of them broke down and jumped into the water holding a baby in her arms. The Marines picked her up out from the water and opened a volley of gunfire over the wall of crates. The situation was immediately normalized and the evacuation proceeded unhindered."

A Cuban POW captured by Somalians in Ogaden
Photo from Der Spiegel (FRG)

Rear Admiral (Ret) **Anatoly KOLCHIN**, the then head of the political department of the Pacific Task Force.

"Admiral Khronopulo headed for Mogadiscio to rescue our people and our mission was to evacuate Soviet people and property from Berbera. There were some support units there, a floating dock and a floating repair shop. Together with families, the Soviet colony in Berbera numbered about 500 people.

"I would like to briefly describe the political atmosphere that resulted in the unfriendly actions on the part of the Somalian leadership: Siad Barre deployed a 42,000-strong army against Ethiopia trying to take over the Ethiopian province of Ogaden. The Ethiopian army was weaker. Besides, it was bogged down with fighting separatists in Eritrea. Cuba sent its troops to help Ethiopia. The Soviet Union provided its transport ships and weapons for the Cuban contingent. The Cubans liberated Ogaden in a relatively short time and the Somalian army was defeated and scattered. The Soviet involvement in the defence of Ethiopia was no secret for Siad Barre and Soviets became his enemies, just like Cubans and Ethiopians."

"When our ships arrived at Berbera from the Gulf of Aden, we were already informed that all Soviet property had been confiscated by Somalians, that Somalian interior troops had encircled the Soviet colony, were searching the colony compound and citizens, and did not allow anything to be taken out of the colony. We also heard that at airports Soviet people were subjected to abuse. As for Cubans, they were targets of all kinds of humiliations. The Somalian authorities issued a decree prohibiting Soviet ships to approach Somalian ports. We had no time to wait for detailed instructions from the centre: we had to save our people. We had no choice but to resort to a little psychological attack. The landing of our Marines supported by tanks and artillery looked so impressive that Somalian interior troops did not dare to interfere. People were quickly evacuated, then the Marines dismantled the Soviet property and equipment and loaded it onto the ships. The floating dock was torn off the berth and towed to Aden together with the floating repair shop. The mission was carried out without a single shot, with no excesses and in the shortest time possible."

The view from the shore

Igor PENKOV, then a Senior Political Advisor to the the head of the political section of the Somalian Navy, now an assistant professor at the Patrice Lumumba Peoples' Friendship University.

"In 1977 the war between Somalia and Ethiopia was in full swing. The political and economic causes of the war are very well studied and even mentioned in the Soviet Encyclopaedia. However, my personal conclusion is that the real reason why Somalia attacked Ethiopia was the desire to spread Islam in the region. Christian Ethiopia was a thorn in the side of its Islamic neighbours.

"The Soviet Union tried to observe neutrality, but as a result found itself in a complicated and uncomfortable situation: our military advisors worked in both countries. Speaking at the 25th Congress of the CPSU, President Siad Barre of Somalia described his effort to build socialism in Somalia and the Soviet leadership willingly believed him. We, the Soviets who worked in Somalia, had many chances to see that the Soviet leadership was poorly informed about the real state of affairs in Somalia. There was Podgorny's pompous visit and Moscow believed it was a success. As for Mogadis-

Captain Second Rank Penkov with Somalian colleagues: then still friends

cio, it was highly dissatisfied with the visit, because the Somalian leadership believed the Soviet representative should have brought either credits or better still – large-scale financial assistance. The aim of Somalia was to get as much as possible from the USSR. Islam was the main thing for them, and they only needed socialism to get economic advantages. The combination of sharia with the theory of socialism was absurd, but the Soviet leadership believed Somalia was on the right track. Meanwhile, the country was dominated by feudal order, fanatism and Siad Barre's personality cult.

"I tried to inform Moscow about the real situation, but my letters never got there. Sometimes my letters were destoyed in front of me, because they contradicted the optimistic messages sent by the Soviet community's leaders in Somalia. This was nothing out of the ordinary: some leaders wanted to embellish their personal contribution to "frienship between peoples" even in the countries which were openly hostile to Soviets. As a result the embassy stopped sharing objective information with me. Like all other military advisors I had to listen to foreign radio stations to be informed about the developments in the Somalian-Ethiopian war.

"The first sign of an oncoming storm was connected with Fidel Castro's visit to Somalia. Castro's portraits were to be seen all over the city. Cuban military advisors also worked in Somalia, and they had the same problem that we did: good relations with Ethiopia. When Castro spoke the audiences applauded. At one point, however, Castro suggested that Somalians borrow the Ethiopian experience of setting up communes and the audience went into uncontrolled rage, whistling, catcalling, hurling stones at the Cuban leader and tearing his portraits off the walls. Siad Barre ordered that all Cubans leave the country within 48 hours. The Cubans were visibly short of time and we provided shelter for them, thanks to the Soviet colony's happy location on the outskirts of the Somalian capital.

"Our turn came as well. It shocked me how quickly people could turn from friends to bitter enemies. We used to be really friendly with Somalian colleagues. They would say: "We have many major things in common. Our revolution took place in October, and your revolution occurred in October as well. Your country's name is the USSR and our country's name is the USSR as well: the Union of Somalian Socialist Republics." I once wondered which republics the Somalian Union was composed of. The answer was that President Barre believed that such states as Jibuti, Kenia, and Ethiopia were an inseparable part of Somalia...

"In the morning of November 13 we were still shaking hands with Somalian colleagues. In the afternoon the president announced that Somalia denounced the treaties with the Soviet Union and explicitly hinted that Soviet people leave the country. In the evening we were already surrounded by enemies. It came as a nasty surprise for Moscow which used to lull itself with tales about "eternal friendship." For us it was a nightmare. The houses where Soviet people lived were cut off from the electricity and water supplies. The colony compound was encircled by commandos to protect us from the raging crowds. The crowds kept assembling around us hurling stones and abuse. We started experiencing food problems – no shop would sell anything to a Soviet. We were lucky to shoot several wild pigs which are not considered edible in Somalia.

President Siad Barre: Soviet property remains in Somalia

"Unlike the Cubans we were graciously given a week to pack up. The Soviet people turned into virtual hostages. Besides, there were tons of Soviet property in Somalia. Was it possible to complete the evacuation in just one week? The Somalian authorities solved the problem very easily: they confiscated the Soviet property. Was it possible to evacuate thousands of Soviet specialists and their families in one week? I addressed the commander of the Somalian Navy asking him to allow Soviet amphibious ships from the Gulf of Aden to enter the port of Mogadiscio. Siad Barre refused, saying that there was nothing to evacuate.

"Our group started to amass at the airport, but the airport turned out to be a trap. They were simply taunting us. Special flights were organized to evacuate us: the passenger Ilyushin planes were piloted by experienced military flyers clad in civilian attire. When the planes approached the airport at night, Somalians turned off all lights on the runways. It was the pilots' experience and sheer luck that prevented crashes.

"The line to the customs control was endless. Women with children were sleeping on the floor and some of them fell ill. Customs inspectors worked in shifts replacing each other, going over our people's things with a fine tooth-comb. I cannot say whether this rumour is true, but the Cuban ambassador was said to have been treated in an especially humiliating way. They forced him to strip almost completely. Our people also had a full share of humiliation. Somalians would take away everything including already worn-out children's clothes. A customs inspector would put the things he liked aside, grin and pronounce: "That's mine!" Above the customs area were cameramen of BBC and Hsinhua. The ambassador instructed us to behave so as not to compromise the Soviet Union and its people.

However, the BBC and Hsinhua people's patience was awarded. One Soviet specialist, a big man, punched the customs inspector in the jaw after the latter scattered his belongings, including children's clothes, all over the checking counter. We armed ourselves with pepsi bottles and rose to fight. Somalians were wise enough to understand that if they opened fire on unarmed people, it would be worse for them. They were afraid to fight. Soon the Marines were there and the checking procedure accelerated. I left Somalia on the last Antonov plane. No one inspected my luggage. When I came back to the USSR I was asked to sign a written pledge of silence..."

* * *

P.S. The Soviet Union has not forgotten the participants in the mission in Somalia. Some of them were awarded with decorations, but were asked not to reveal the reasons for that honour. Admiral Khronopulo has recently become the first serviceman to receive the Gold Medal of the Soviet Peace Fund.

DOCUMENTARY

Captive in one's own country

Lev Razgon

Thus far I commented on documents concerned with a prewar Gulag camp that was relatively "mild," compared to others. What about other Gulag camps as from the day the war broke out on June 22, 1941?

Continued from Nos. 31 and 32

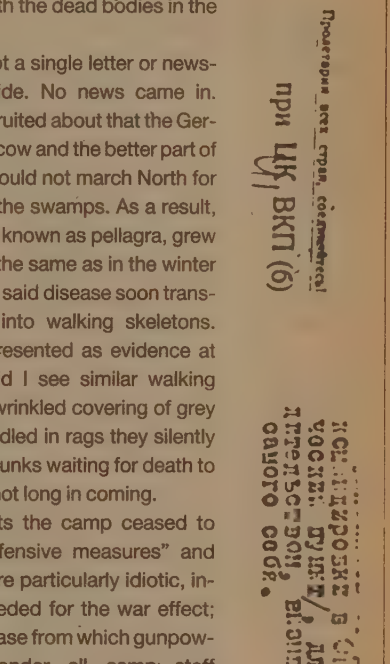
I was at the First camp point of the NKVD Ustvymlag concentration camp when the war broke out. It needed but a couple of days for us to be subjected to a new system of procedures that were far ahead of the "efficiency" of the country's somewhat confused high military command. Our bosses, on the contrary, though not Civil War heroes, nor marshals and army commanders, were not at all taken aback. In fact, they reacted so swiftly that I think this "highly confidential" system of measures had been drafted long before the war began, and had been sealed away in safes.

In short, in two or three days all Moscow broadcasts were stopped and the loudspeakers were dismantled. We were told we would no longer be allowed to correspond with home, that we would not be getting any other mail or food parcels, that workday was to be extended to 10-12 hours and that there were to be no days off at all. The quota was jacked up while victualling was reduced. A refusal to go out to work was now penalized not as before by detention in the punishment block, but as counterrevolutionary sabotage which under Point 14 of Article 58 of the Criminal Code carried the death sentence. It is hard to believe that the architects of all these "defensive" measures were total pathological imbeciles. They were simply indoctrinated by a system based on the belief that everything could be decided by means of such measures as "ban," "indicate," "elucidate," "call to book" and "take action." Incidentally, insofar as such terms still comprise the tail-end of a legion of crucial documents we may infer that that system is still very much alive!

At any rate, by the start of autumn 1941, the first year of the war, all these steps started to yield sinister fruit. What our bosses did not realize was that they simply could not further stretch the stamina of which the human organism was capable. They were all so dulled by the hitherto unlimited possibilities of replacing dead "V-listed" prisoners that they did not see that the war had stopped the influx. Indeed, at the outset immediately after the war broke out, all jails and prisons in the Western USSR were quickly emptied. Some prisoners were killed off on the spot, others were quickly dispersed throughout the Gulag. Yet, all such resources could not make up for the daily increasing number of prisoners who could barely manage to crawl from the huts to the gatehouse, let alone go out to work in the taiga. The military escort refused to take such prisoners "on their last legs" because they held up the movement of the prisoner convoy. Indeed, they might very well fall down by the roadside in which case the escort simply did not know what to do. Were the guards to shoot them? Such directives had still not been issued. Moreover, what were they to do with the dead bodies in the taiga?

Meanwhile, we had not a single letter or newspaper at all from outside. No news came in. Rumours were already bruited about that the Germans had captured Moscow and the better part of Russia long since, but would not march North for reason of the taiga and the swamps. As a result, that "malady of despair" known as pellagra, grew apace. The picture was the same as in the winter of 1938 if not worse. The said disease soon transformed human beings into walking skeletons. Only on photographs presented as evidence at the Nuremberg trials did I see similar walking skeletons over which a wrinkled covering of grey skin was stretched. Huddled in rags they silently squatted or lay on their bunks waiting for death to take them and that was not long in coming.

To all practical intents the camp ceased to function. All these "defensive measures" and their ensuing results were particularly idiotic, insofar as timber was needed for the war effect; after all cellulose is the base from which gunpowder is made. No wonder all camp staff employees, inclusive of those wearing shoulderboards, enjoyed deferment as personnel engaged at defence enterprises of strategic significance. Only by the close of the winter of 1941-42 the top bosses eventually realized that their defensive "enthusiasm" was to no effect. All the old bosses were kicked out and replaced by new bosses, who were somewhat wiser but more horrible. They quickly put paid to all incapable of recovering, fed survivors with American cornbeef and dazzlingly white Canadian bread, not only permitted food parcels but even encouraged their sending, allowed correspondence, and reinstalled the loudspeakers, through which Radio Moscow announcer Levitan's cheerful voice noted that at such-and-such a height, in the process of active defence, Soviet troops had put out of action a large number of enemy tanks. As for prisoners who did not share in the required degree of optimism, and thus exerted a disruptive effect on the "contingent," as the prisoners were now officially termed, they were detained



Human bones under each sleeper of the Vorkuta railway

for reason of "defeatist agitation" and dispatched to the camp base of Vozhael where they were either sentenced to be shot, or given an additional term of imprisonment and shipped off to some other camp.

Such was how matters stood at our Ustvymlag camp. Now let us analyze and comment on documents referring to another Gulag camp. The time is the same, namely those first few months of the war, during the second half of 1941 and the spring of 1942. Actually this was not one but two camps, the North Pechora and Zapolyarny sub-Arctic camps, that were incorporated in one system and subordinated to the NKVD's Chief Administration of Railway Construction Camps. These were rather old camps, which had been in operation since 1937 and which were engaged on the crucial project of building a railway line from Kotlas to Vorkuta. Today one may see at the respective railway station in Moscow those clean, even stylish German-made railway coaches bearing the legend "Moscow-Vorkuta." So if one needs one may travel in a sleeping car along this entire longish railway, and peer meanwhile through the large windows at the joyless landscape which consists of nothing but forests and swampland. One may also catch sight of the remains of log-walled prison camps and tilting guard towers, the traces of super shock work construction. Here the famous quotation from the well-known 19th century Russian poet Nikolai Nekrasov, namely "along the sides all the bones are of Russians" would be obviously inadequate, as under each sleeper are the remains of a human being, if not more than one, say those of the survivors who built this railway.

When the war broke out it was realized that still much had to be done to complete the project. On the other hand, the very first months of the war showed that the oil of Ukhta, the coal of Vorkuta and the timber of the sub-Arctic taiga would be of crucial significance for the war effort. It was only natural to expect all the necessary conditions would be afforded to the builders of this railway, even if slave labourers, to enable them to do a better job and finish construction sooner. Nothing of the sort! The camps engaged on railway construction were still that same old mincer for mowing down hundreds of thousands of men who could fight, work or create the potential necessary for the war effort. This was not only inhuman, it was simply senseless.

But may we rather refer the reader to documents, which cannot be accused of bias or excessive emotion. These documents were produced by those self-same "operation Chekists" who comprised the nucleus of the punitive Gulag system and were addressed to their superiors.

The first such document I seek to introduce is termed "Report on sanitary hygiene for prisoners of the NKVD Pechorlag" with the reminder that it is "as of November 10, 1941." Dated December 4, 1941, it is addressed to "Major of State Security Iorsh, chief of the NKVD Gulag operations division." The Gulag headquarters were now not in Kuznetsky Most street in downtown Moscow, but at No.48 January 9 Street, Chkalov. No wonder as this was already after October 16, when from Khimki the Germans could already watch Moscow through their binoculars and institutions of vital significance for the country had been evacuated to places secure from the enemy offensive. Hence the Gulag administration was now in Orenburg, long renamed Chkalov, far away from the fighting fronts.

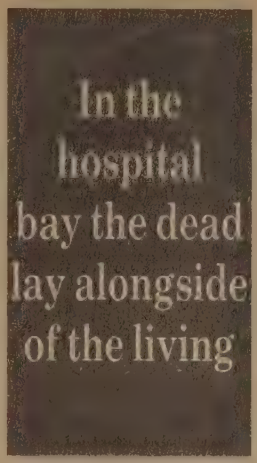
But back to the "report." Its language is explicit, laconic and to the point: "According to information from the Operations section of the North Pechora and Zapolyarny camps of the Chief Administration of the NKVD Railway Construction Camps, for reason of the poor state of sanitary hygiene in the camps, mortality and sickness rates among the prisoners continue to grow and are assuming menacing proportions. Thus in October 1941, 1,474 prisoners died, which accounts for 1.32 percent of the prisoner total."

Let us break off at this point. We shall now elucidate what this document does not specify, namely the exact figure for the camp "contingent." According to Cocker, if 1,474 comprises 1.32 percent of the total, then this total will be 111,666. True, these figures soon changed, as futher there is the supplementary note: "During the first decade of November 471 persons died. V group sickness in September comprised 12 percent, in October already 17.2 per cent, and in November still more. According to incomplete

data, V group work losses totalled 566,877 man-days in October. At some camp points, for instance, the First Section of the Pechorlag, the V group rose to some 35 percent.

"At sub-Arctic points, where climatic conditions are particularly rigorous, in September the V group totalled 8.7 percent, in October 11.9 percent, and as of November 10, 15.5 percent. Deaths totalled 70 in September, 329 in October, and 189 for the first ten days of November.

"With a prisoner total for these points equivalent to 27,823, the work-force minus comprises 7,454. Of the hospital bay total of 2,113, pellagra has affected 601 and scurvy 297. Freed from work were 1,503 while the debility team numbers 683."



Allow me now to break off to explain what the "debility team" implies. Actually these were the few survivors, who had managed to crawl out of the huts that were termed "hospital bays." Unlike the majority, they were not carried out and tossed into a crate to be buried in pits in the camp graveyard, but theoretically were to be employed on lighter jobs and get additional rations so as to regain strength as worthwhile workers. The trouble was that in this Inferno, even a briefing from Satan himself had no effect on more vicious subordinate devils. Thus Lieutenant of State Security Balatsky, deputy chief of the Operations section who signed this "report" dispassionately notified his superiors: "Rude, humiliating treatment is meted out to sick prisoners. Persons registered in the debility team are forced to fulfil the same quota as healthy prisoners do. All who fail to do so, have rations reduced, which emaciates them still further and makes them still less capable of work.

"Thus Ivanovsky, chief of the 73rd column of the 16th section told prisoners in the debility team:

"'I'll wear you down to bone and skin, but get you to cut timber.'

"Ivanovsky sentenced to the punishment block nine members of the debility team who failed to fulfil the quota. Zubov, the deputy for labour of the 2nd column of the 16th section, beat the sick prisoner Perelygin so badly that he died."

The possibility of being allotted to the debility team was only postponement of the almost inevitable end for all landing in the "hospital bay" huts.

Obliged to relate why the "contingent" was unsatisfactorily employed Lieutenant of State Security Balatsky reports:

"Accommodation and sanitary hygiene are unsatisfactory as not ensuring the minimum human requirements.

"Columns Nos. 2, 105, etc. as well as the debility team in the 16th section have no underwear or outer garments. Huts are unheated, are freezing cold, are filthy and lice-ridden, prisoners sleep in their coats. Disinfection and airing facilities are non-existent. No boiled water is provided. In some huts there are no bunks and no flooring, as a result prisoners sleep on the bare ground. This has caused wholesale sickness. In October, in the 105th column of the 16th section alone, 466 persons were freed from work for reason of sickness, while during the first 12 days of November 214 were freed from work. The picture is the same at the sections, 10th, 11th and 235th columns: At the 13th section' only half the prisoners have winter clothing. Prisoners wear cold shoes and boots, which has occasioned frostbite.

"Meals are not properly arranged. There is nothing but farinaceous products and grits. Because of the complete absence of vegetables and the inadequate supply of meat and fat, for which flour and grits are substituted, the sections save large sums of money. For the first 20 days of October in the 19th section alone, prisoners were not provided with a total of 37,359 rubles' worth of food."

Let me break off again to explain to the uninitiated what "farinaceous" mean. This is not macaroni, noodles, buns or the like, but simply rye flour of the most inferior quality used either to bake bread, which consisted half of water, or to cook the "first course" known as 'grindy,' actually a bowl of hot water into which a small handful of rye flour was tossed and ground. All who did fulfill the quota, got a "second course," which as I explained earlier, consisted of several spoonfuls of thin gruel made of grits, which in this case was a surrogate, or ersatz, comprised of the waste spun off during the making of barley. True, often there were no grits at all, and in that case, the "second course" consisted simply of 200 grammes more of the self-same bread. It is likely that future students of Gulag archives will discover

Camp babies are prisoners from birth

the rations listed for prisoners as countersigned by all the big bosses and note that the prisoners should have got so much meat, so much fish, so much butter, so much vegatable oil, so much sugar, and so much in the way of vegetables and sundry other "tidbits." The prisoners must have been rationed much if in but 20 days in one section alone they did not receive 37,000 odd rubles' worth of food, moreover, according to prices which today would seem fantastically small to us. But this again was the same padding as to be observed in all other documentation. Actually everything was reduced to that selfsame "farinaceous products," which could sustain life for but a few weeks or months, after which there came what the "report" indicated:

"Camp hospital bays are overcrowded with sick prisoners. Thus the central hospital bay in the fourth section accommodates 736 people though there are but 485 beds. In the hospital bay of the 14th section some sick prisoners are accommodated on bare ground inside tents. Due to the shortage of medical personnel in the hospitals, the sick are not examined for days at a stretch. Case histories are not drawn up."

Though the cited "report" is quite veracious, it uses terms that by no means picture reality. Thus "hospital bay" stood for an ordinary hut, and "bed" for space where 485 prisoners could be lumped together. Actually 736 were shoved in which meant they lay these either on their sides or on the floor under the bunks, or just on the bare ground if in a tent, moreover in a sub-Arctic winter, mind you! The dead lay alongside of the living and the job of the so-called "medical personnel" each morning was to separate the dead from the living and pull them out, to be carried away to the so-called "graveyard." The "report" gives the facts for the specific columns. However as this document had to furnish the truth and nothing but the truth and the full truth at that, it winds up by stating:

"Analogous cases are to be observed in the other sections and columns. Though Comrade Potemkin, chief of the NKVD Pechorlag and Comrade Uspensky, chief of the Zapolyarny camp, as well as the chiefs of the political departments were notified of all indicated matters, up till now they have not paid due notice to them.

"Lieutenant of State Security Balatsky, deputy chief section Operations department Gulag USSR NKVD."

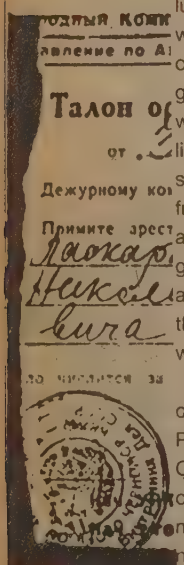
As one will see, the "Chekists amidst the Chekists," that is the staff of the Operations sections cannot be reproached for having concealed the true picture from their own bosses! In another "report" Lieutenant Malgin, chief of the Operations department of the NKVD Pechorlag, notifies his superiors of the state of affairs as of October 10, 1941:

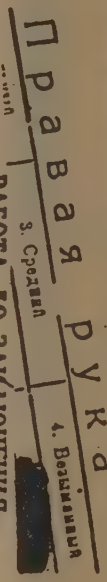
"Currently sickness and mortality rates are assuming menacing proportions. Whereas 322 prisoners died in August, according to as yet incomplete data 892 prisoners died in September, and another 210, again according to incomplete data, died during the first nine days of October. An analysis of the diagnosed causes of death indicates that mortality rates are mostly due to pellagra and ulcerative colitis coupled with complete emaciation.

"Thus in September 161 prisoners died of pellagra, 123 of ulcerative colitis coupled with complete emaciation, 34 of lobar pneumonia, 29 of TB, 16 of haemorohagic colitis, 28 of cardiac paralysis, 15 of dysentery, 15 of various accidents, and the others of various other diseases.

"... There is no boiled water for either huts or work place. As the canteen does not provide the prisoners with tableware, meals take anywhere from two to three hours. (To understand what this means, imagine a long line out in the open, outside the hut that is called the canteen, waiting to take over the aluminium bowls and spoons from prisoners who have consumed their bowl of "balanda.") There are no airing facilities and nothing of this is being built. Column chief Petrov is of the view: 'Why construct airing facilities, when we can dispense with that.'"

This "report" has lines which at times seem incomprehensible, unfathomable. Thus: "Patients undergoing surgery and midwifery, tubercular patients, and children afflicted with whooping cough are all currently in one block." Stretch your imagination and picture in one block, actually a hut, men and women, tubercular patients, and women giving birth lying side by side. Whence the children? Because half the prisoners are females. However hard the guards sought to forbid and harass "illicit cohabitation," even the





Sub-Arctic "Strategic installations"

highest vigilance could not prevent it. What is astonishing is that even emaciation was unable in the case of some prisoners, to suppress the sexual urge. True, emaciation has its various chapters. As a rule a camp of this nature turned the prisoners into completely sexless creatures yet there were children, children born amidst filth and dying amidst filth. According to instructions such babies were immediately taken away from the mothers and isolated. They became prisoners as soon as born. When they took sick in the hut allotted them, they were immediately transferred to the general "hospital bay." What does seem odd is that camp-born babies could be afflicted with such common child sicknesses as whooping cough!

Earlier I described how hunger struck our Ustvymlag camp in the first months of the war. Still each day we did get our ration, though terribly reduced. However to judge from Operations section reports, in the Pechorlag camp it was much worse. Thus in January 1942 this camp's Operations chief sent Major of State Security Iorsh, chief of the Gulag Operations section, an "urgent report," stating that, "The food supply situation is extremely strained, near catashophic in a number of cases." He further reports:

"Repeated requests from the camp administration to the Chief Administration of Railway Construction Camps for assistance have gone unheeded. Since camp mortality and sickness rates are high, a further increase is to be expected in such rates. The food supplies shortages evoke an extremely negative response from the prisoners.

"To illustrate, allow me to cite the situation at the camp's 13th section. On January 4 the last flour was issued. During past 4 days there have been no hot breakfasts and prisoners were taken out hungry, having gotten but half the bread ration due. On January 4, due to the unprompt delivery of flour to the bakery, bread was issued only by 6 p.m. The sickness rate has increased. Observed in the sections are wholesale refusals to work even by teams that did good work before; there have been cases of escapes and numerous counterrevolutionary actions."

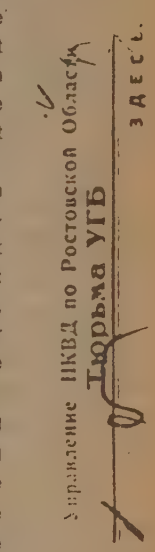
Now here is a phrase that is of definite interest to the researcher! What kind of "counter-revolutionary actions" did the Operations section chief mean? Accordingly, he states in his "urgent report":

"Here are some concrete facts: at the 10th column on January 2 the prisoner Shlykov tried to commit suicide but was prevented from doing so. Asked why he had done that, he said: 'It is better to commit suicide than to die of hunger.'

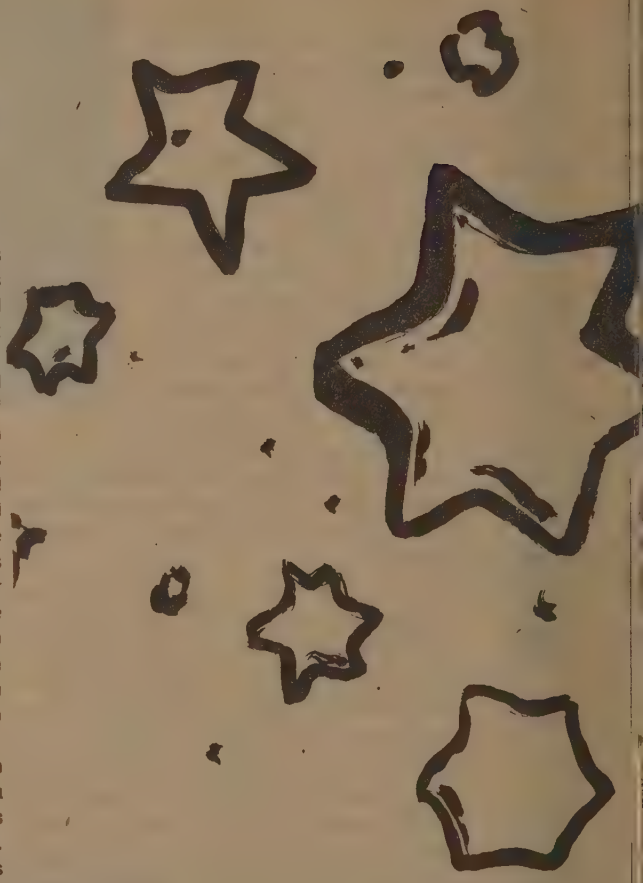
"On January 8 in the 3rd column Sosenkov's team refused to report for work when they did not get hot breakfasts. Sosenkov said: 'It's the last straw. You starve us, but keep shouting that greater concern should be shown for the human being. Feed us and then we'll work.'"

One must particularly stress the meaning of the terms employed, that specific Gulag newspeak, in which the documents are couched. Thus "breakfast" implies half the bread ration, as issued to the prisoner before going off to work. Which means that having had a bad night's rest, garbed in damp clothing, the hunger-weakened person gets 200 grammes of wet bread which he instantly gobbles down and then spends 12 hours at work. This, mind you, takes place in January, not in Florida or the like, but in sub-Arctic regions, and the work in question is either to fell trees or dig up the icy ground and build up a railway embankment. How could they bear up under all that? They did not. They died. Nearly all died. Their place was taken by other incoming prisoners. In 1941-42 prisoners were evacuated from the areas into which the Germans were thrusting more speedily than old people, the sick, the children and the wives of soldiers and officers. They were evacuated from the prisons, from the bigger and smaller camps, from penal colonies. Half died on this long, lethal journey. Those who survived – utterly emaciated, unclothed, barefoot, at times hardly moving – were imported into sub-Arctic camps, specially engaged on "strategic installations." It goes without saying that construction of the North Pechora railway was one such "installation."

(To be concluded)



Revelations of a "genuine patriot"



At the founding congress of the Russian National Party in Moscow a man wearing high boots got up on the rostrum and said: "I represent the Russian-Vyatka commune"

Alexander Roslyakov

Some time ago, riding on the Moscow metro, I asked a group of foreigners with slanted eyes where they came from. The foreigners, people of short stature, gladly shouted a geographical name I had heard only rarely.

Recently I carefully put the same question to a man who happened to be beside me in a place near Moscow. He gave no reply. It turned out later that he was from Nagorny Karabakh.

Thinking about the grief of other people I think about the bloody seeds which have not yet struck deep roots in Russian soil. At least I hope they have not. I have in mind Russians who, longing for blood, want a repetition in Russia of the bloody events which took place in Nagorny Karabakh.

I had a talk with the founding father of a strange village called "Russian-Vyatka commune". He is one of those who consider themselves patriots, though they have not yet done any service to their country. The conversation took place in a remote corner of the Kirov (former Vyatka) region.

I shall not give his name, because I do not want to give free publicity to him. In our troubled time, with so many dodgers around, some people want to be mentioned in the media, and they do not care in what context. Moreover, people are inclined to build legends about the names of persecuted martyrs. True, the Pagan, as the man was nicknamed by local people, could not achieve his goal, though he boasted that crowds of people armed with axes would rise at his call to a holy national war. Two young local farmers who are building spacious houses for their families, advised me to keep away from the Pagan – there is a lot of interesting things I could learn from others.

Indeed, ours is an interesting time, a time when initiative is thriving everywhere. There are no bricks or clay in the country which occupies a sixth of the world's territory. The country, a considerable part of which is occupied by forests, has no timber. However, everything is found when initiative is displayed by private owners.

It was a pleasure to see how well things were going on with the two young farmers, Sergei Volkov and Ivan Dolgirev. They made use of the old logs and old facilities dumped by the local collective farm. Such people, who work with gusto, are respected by local residents.

In that place I also came across another oasis of private enterprise. Azerbaijanis opened a sort of tavern in the basement of the local department store. The tables in a spacious hall were empty, however, because most people prefer to buy wine brought by the Azerbaijanis, and some, having drunk a lot, fall right near the door. I asked for some food, and the owner of the tavern gladly offered a portion of meat roasted on a spit. I asked policemen whether the private traders annoy them by serving wine to local people. I was told that the Azerbaijanis help the police by their business. How? It turned out that the tavern attracts odd workers, and the police employ them to build new premises.

Several families from Moscow and Kirov have settled in a deserted village in a god-forsaken corner of the Kirov region or the Vyatka land, as it was called before. One of them is the family of the above-mentioned Pagan, who lives here with his two wives (former and new, Lubomudra by name) and his two sons aged 21 and 28.

The driver of a jeep who brought me to the place along muddy roads, stayed to be present at my talk with the Pagan. At first, he asked me what kind of press I represented. "In what sense?" I inquired. The man wanted to know whether I represented the patriotic or Judaic press. I replied that I am a Russian. Our conversation first ran on the Judaic theme, on vile democrats and damned proletarians. The Pagan had no intention of inviting me into one of his two houses (his former wife lives with children in one house, and he and his new wife Lubomudra in the other), seeing that, I opened my notebook. "What is the commune occupied with? Does your settle-

ment here mean a return to the sources of life? And why did you choose precisely this place?"

The Pagan told me that Vyatka is a primordial Russian land inhabited by indigenous Russians. His idea is to unite Russians on the basis of their affinity and land. The Vyatichis, one of the most famous tribes mentioned in the annals of Russian history, lived in the area of Moscow and Kaluga, but they never lived in the basin of the Vyatka river. The similarity of the two words – Vyatka and Vyatichi – is purely accidental.

However, the Pagan is so sure of himself that this discrepancy is nonsense in his opinion. He believes in what he later called "mystic" rightness. I noticed that his children also had a strong feeling of their rightness. According to them, for instance, there are no real Russians in Moscow and Leningrad. Those who live in these cities are the scum of society. Those who are not Jews themselves have Jewish wives. The October 1917 revolution in they said, was carried through by Jews, not workers. In their opinion, the Jews took advantage of the Russians' national aspirations for their selfish purposes. The Bolshevik party was a centralized organization through which international Judaism pursued its far-reaching aims. Christianity is a bait for which the northern peoples fell. The Russians do not have a real homeland. At first, they were suppressed by Tatars and later by Jews. The Chernobyl disaster and the attempt to reverse the course of rivers are planned actions of Zionism.

As Pagan paused a little I chimed in to tell an anecdote in order to clean the air. The driver burst out laughing and went to his car. Then laughed the two boys and the Pagan himself.

After the Pagan had left to set the table, his sons showed me around their yard. It was not a large farm – an orchard and five goats. What they told me on the way reminded me very much of the ideas of their stepfather. Here are some of their truths: peasants did not eat meat in the past, the forest is my canteen, before picking grass ask it to pardon you, it is more pleasant to greet the sunrise here than take part in the devilish life of the city."

Perhaps, it is pleasant indeed when the mother brings them food from town. Can the sweet bliss in the lap of nature be a means of existence? Words about the tender attitude to nature sound nice, of course. The Roman poet Vergilius wrote about the devout attitude towards the earth, the sacred fear of the unknown, the desire to avoid doing harm, the power of the sun, pantheism as the immortality of living beings on earth. Indeed, what can be more beautiful than nirvana, the state of harmony with the world? However, the promises of the Communists are also beautiful, even if they are considered merely Zionist bait. Some politicians, like Zhirinovsky, promised all earthly blessings for the people. But who will feed them after all?

When our conversation became more frank I asked the Pagan what they lived on, where they find money to buy houses, how they are going to live further and pay taxes. The present time is mystic, he replied. Tomorrow I shall be hanged on a lamp-post or shall collect taxes myself. No sooner had we done away with the attempt to establish clumsy justice and build a paradise on earth than a call was made to take up axes.

I do not fear for the young farmers Sergei Volkov and Ivan Dolgirev. They will not respond to this call, because theirs is a different path. Speaking about the tender spirit of pantheism, antiquity, and Russian folklore, we should remember that the poetics of nature is inseparable from the poetics of labour. One should work for a living. It is impossible to bring about a paradise by just any means.

I almost forgot to say that one more man, an odd hand from a nearby village, was present at our meeting. He also cursed Jews of whom there were none in the area and who allegedly spoiled his life. "Here is a real Russian," the Pagan introduced him to me. Next day, however, I nearly stumbled over this man. He was snoring heavily on the threshold of the Azerbaijani tavern. Is it real life? Such a person will hardly point to himself (and possibly others) as the main culprit. It is much easier to say that Jews, Azerbaijanis and Tatars are to blame.

I had a feeling of satisfaction after a short conversation with the two young farmers and a gloomy feeling after I had talked with the Pagan's two sons. I understood that their father was also their spiritual mentor. "Imperial interests are higher than life," they argued. "Life does not cost a penny. No one is immortal. The main thing is to die with a sword in one's hand. Stalin restored the empire which Lenin, a prostitute, almost lost." It was funny to hear the last statement because at the beginning of the Second World War Stalin said just the opposite. The two sons, lusty handsome fel-

Drawing by Igor Shein

lows, imbibed the philosophy of their father like a sponge imbibes water. Do they feel an insidious contradiction between reality and what they preach? I do not know. I think, however, that they will pay for their delusions in the future.

But let us turn to the father, who was setting the table. Strangely enough, the members of the sect of Russian "patriots" do not at all resemble the Slavs of the past and do not have features characteristic of the Slav race. For instance, the short moustache, forehead, eyes, and facial expression of the Pagan make him look like his idol, a general whom he admires. "The healthy forces of the army, KGB, and interior ministry troops will fulfill their sacred duty," that odious general once said.

We continued our conversation at the table. The Pagan treated me to a meal consisting of cut nettle, dandelion, and other greens. His political life began in 1958, when he was put in prison as "an enemy of the state." He was tried for a trivial misdemeanour – for aiming at a portrait of Lenin from a smallbore rifle and for taking part in a student row over the events in Hungary. While in prison the Pagan, as he said, learned "the whole truth about the revolution," the Vlasovites, "Soviet government without Jews and Communists". He understood then that "the sacred duty of everyone is to fight against the diabolic regime". He established contacts with the Popular Labour Alliance, which, incidentally, degenerated long ago.

For his ties with the Popular Labour Alliance Pagan was clapped into prison again. In all, he was flung into prison four times. "Gleb Yakunin is my former friend," he boasted, "while Grigorenko, Bukovsky, and Ginzburg were at my beck and call." The term of imprisonment was usually two to three years. Pagan does not conceal that he owes his enlightenment to his tormentors who even wanted to put him in a mental institution, the most terrible punishment for political prisoners.

During interrogations "healthy forces" in the KGB hinted that I became involved in a Zionist venture against the homeland, the Pagan told me. And so the security bodies helped shape a "patriot".

"The Jews have had their organization since the times of King Solomon," Pagan said. "The Bilderberg Club in Holland is the headquarters of international Zionism. Nixon, Carter, Ford, and Brzezinski are mere pawns in it. The real boss is not known. It is a closely guarded secret."

"How do you know all this?" I asked.

"It is calculated hypothetically," the Pagan replied. "America is an historial enemy of Russia and a domain of Israel. The death of Ostashvili is a sacrifice to Jehovah following the sentence passed at a secret trial. There is no evidence to prove that, but it is obvious from the method of killing. According to the cabalistic teaching, the blood of such victims has a special force, it gives mystic power over the people. Jews are not people. One fourth of Jewish blood in Lenin's veins played a fatal role for the Russian people. Dzerzhinsky has not a single drop of Jewish blood. Stalin is a mystic figure. One cannot speak about him onesidedly, like about Hitler. It is difficult for us, ordinary people to understand them. I fully agree with Hitler. I wish we had a man like him. He and Stalin should have recarved the map of the world. But the Jews pitted them one against the other and provoked a war."

"And what about gas chambers?" I asked.

"There were no gas chambers. The Americans built them deliberately in order to discredit fascism. Stalin respected the Russian nation and did not have Jews among his advisers."

"But Stalin killed millions of people," I said.

"It was a fatal mistake engineered by Jews. His enlightenment came too late and Jews poisoned him."

"What to you mean by enlightenment?"

"I have in mind the Jewish affair and preparations for exiling Jews." The Pagan showed me his draft of a presidential decree on the Jewish question. "In view of the constant flagrant violation of the Constitution of the USSR, which denies advantages to any nation, especially the Jews who make up 0.69 percent of the population while holding 80 to 90 percent of posts in a number of vitally important spheres, which engenders crisis phenomena and creates tension in all spheres of our society, I resolve to: eliminate the disproportion in a three months' period by an organized removal of persons of Jewish nationality into other social spheres or by faciliating their emigration... 1991. President Mikhail Gorbachev."

"What will happen if Gorbachev does not sign this decree?" I asked.

"There are forces which will prevent the annihilation of the Russian nation. Russia is unpredictable, but the general (whom the Pagan admires), the only man who declared he belongs to the Russian people, will establish justice. Jews are strong because of their intellect and Russians because of their simple-heartedness. The Russian soul has different aims, it is irrational. Slavs count on the off-chance, they are trustful. That is why military discipline is needed. Gorbachev depends on the army and interior ministry troops which will still be useful to him, as events in the Baltic republics have shown."

"Are there guarantees that the general, should he become a dictator, will not be depraved and duped just as Hitler duped Stalin? Will he not order the shooting of open-hearted and credulous people?" I asked.

"We should take a broader view," the Pagan replied. "It's true that an honest, decent man is unable to rise even to the rank of sergeant in the army. If he does, he is either a fool or a Communist Party member, a scoundrel or a rogue. I know this from my own experience. However, the general is close to my heart mystically. The patriots of Russia will not allow arms to be turned against the Russians."

"How can one determine that a man is a Jew and, therefore, must be deported? Are there methods for this purpose? It is said that Jews have penetrated even the *Pamyat* (Memory) society?"

"People of Jewish blood will go away themselves. They will be unable to exist in the Russian atmosphere. We shall use force only against those who will not go on their own free will. It will be easy to establish this, because the neighbours or colleagues know something about such people. The KGB has

archives and informers."

"Many people are born of mixed marriages," I said. "Who should be considered a Jew? Suppose a man has only a hundreadth percent of Jewish blood?"

"Gas chambers are needed. Russia must be purged of bad matter. It is necessary to prevent a new global Chernobyl."

It was not worth arguing with the Pagan about facts and the striking or not striking contradictions in what he said,or even the downright lies. Like every fanatic, he has an irrefutable "mystic" argument declared by Christian theologian Tertullian: "I believe because it is absurd."

Let us think about the role and place of the absurd in our days. The painful Karabakh problem, the shooting of people in Tbilisi, Dyushanbe, Uzbekistan and Baltic republics, anonymous salvation committees which give orders for troops, some undiscovered lists and armed militants, unidentified armoured vehicles and helicopters, the ministers who do not know what their subordinates do, the statements of astrologists – all this creates the impression of some adroitly organized absurdity before saving the country by armed force in the eyes of the completely befuddled public.

The previously curbed initiative has been given full play. The whole country is obsessed with the enterprizing zeal; some people are quietly building themselves a comfortable future, others venture into private farming, and still others are constructing real palazzi. On the opposite end, grapes of wrath are maturing. When someone complained to a wise man (a Zionist, to be sure!) that so many rascals were masquerading as patriots so skilfully that it was difficult to unmask them, the latter said: "Don't worry! They soon would be caught red-handed." The prophecy of a wise man turned out to be true. The local "patriots" stole a harmonium from a neighbouring empty peasant house. I saw the musical instrument at the police station. It does not play and, therefore, was not worth the effort of stealing it. "Patriots" simply thought it was worth expropriating anything from someone before guns started firing and a total expropriation began.

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"I've decided to address you the Soviet way"

The newspaper *Tbilisi* has carried an article entitled "A riposte to Dmitry Leonov"

I was not certain of how to address you. The tone of your article and the purpose of writing it, so clearly evident between the lines, made me renounce a respectful address and I have decided to address you the Soviet way.

Comrade Dmitry, I must tell you that your article published in the magazine *New Times* (No. 23/91) did not enhance your prestige and the prestige of Memorial's human rights commission which you head.

We Georgians know our affairs and our President better than others (for some reason our "elder brothers" do not want to understand this). You need not explain to us what kind of "Moscow comrade" you talked with and what kind of "Tbilisi comrade" contacted you and what he did near the residence of the Georgian government. And if you, profoundly enlightened by your "Tbilisi and Moscow comrades", were nevertheless enchanted by our President, believe me that "Georgian black magic" is not to blame. Charisma is simply inherent in a good and courageous Georgian.

Comrade Dmitry, if you were not so brave, did not sign your article and did not name the organization you are affiliated with, the Georgians would have attributed it to another person (because of the complete coincidence of thoughts and expressions).

You were "wonderfully" informed about the Georgian reality by someone who described Georgia as a seat of ignorance and the Georgians as a nation possessed by magic hysteria, as a completely blinded mob. No wonder then that these boors and fanatics, a crowd enamoured of the dictator and dictatorship, have chosen as their minister of culture (what kind of culture can they have, you might ask) a slave who cringes for the sake of his career and is held along with them in the bewitching grip of our President (who, in your opinion, has probably devised Georgian black magic). You, a representative of our "elder brothers," ought to be ashamed. If you pose as a champion of human rights why do you not think about the rights of the Georgian nation and its President? By what right do you flout our national dignity? It would be advisable for you to know that our minister of culture is a wonderful writer and humanist.

Now about the two names mentioned in your lampoon. I want to console you by saying that judicial bodies will settle the case of Dzhaba Ioseliani. However incompetent they may be, they cannot accuse Dzhaba of a greater crime than the one he admitted himself by saying that he had been convicted for larceny four times.

As for Valerian Advadze, whom you also favourably mentioned in the article, it should be recalled that during the multi-party elections held on October 28 his union was unable to poll even four percent of the vote and did not win a single seat in the parliament. At the time Georgia was ruled by party comrades who gave their backing to Advadze for whom you have kind feelings.

I wonder on whom and on what Advadze counted by taking part in the presidential election six months after his utter defeat. As we guessed, though we are a mob, and as your analytical mind concluded, Mr.Advadze was a very desirable candidate precisely for the Moscow comrades who, unlike us, could see and meet him more often than we: Valerian Advadze is a member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and stays almost constantly in Moscow.

Comrade Dmitry, your lampoon, which you obviously wrote to please someone else, does not deserve a reply and that is why I shall not tire the readers by "analyzing" it. Nevertheless, I want to say one thing. Precisely because of such "well-wishers" as you, we Georgians could not remain in the "fraternal" Soviet family of nations. Your wicked writings make us more confident of our decision to withdraw from it.

Comrade Leonov, your technique of penetrating into the offices of "leading" comrades shows that you have spent more than a year or two mastering it. But it seems you have to practise still more to avoid falling under the influence of persons undesirable for you.

Now I would like to say a few words to the *New Times* editor. Mr. Editor, how would you react if some Georgian human rights champion cooked up a lampoon against the recently elected President of the Russian Federation? Would you gladly accept and publish it? Or would you publish a lampoon against the President of the Russian Federation, but not against the President of the USSR?

Nanuli Botsvadze

FROM THE XXth CENTURY POLITICAL THOUGHT

Introduced by *New Times* analyst **Rostislav Zolotaryov**

Imagine a society in which the legislative power's decrees set the limits of man's life. As a result, the citizens, who are free from the instinct of self-preservation, are prepared to do anything. In this case, the cruelty of the state is legitimized by the cruelty of its subjects. A fantastic situation. However, the denial of the right to own property or to travel freely is not a fantasy. Anything can be legitimized: from the terror of secret police to the use of paid informants. This is familiar, too. Now the political cannibalism in the above mentioned example – although it remains a macabre fantasy – does not seem so unreal after the experience of totalitarianism the world has lived through. The example is taken from the book of the writer and thinker Elias Canetti *The Numbered* (1956). This novel appeared as a confirmation of its writer's literary fame. Canetti's first successful novel *Auto da Fé* appeared in 1935. It was a parable – a novel about the tragic gap between the intellect and the will, the intellectual's mentality and the mundane, reason and the profanity of knowledge. The book was also one of the first warnings that "new barbarity" was already approaching.

At that time Canetti was thirty and living in Vienna. For over two decades Canetti basked in the environment that had nurtured writer Kafka, philosopher Popper, economist Hayek. In 1938 Canetti was forced to leave Vienna, fearing the German Anschluß. The new regime did not like either his views, or his ethnic origin (Canetti was a Bulgarian-born Jew). After fleeing Vienna Canetti settled in London and has lived there ever since. In 1981 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

However, novels are not all Canetti is famous for. We are presenting an extract from his publicistic book written in the now rare genre of a political-philosophical treatise – *Crowds and Power* (1960). In this extract the author refers to the problem of national symbols. Not the symbols selected and adopted by a certain nation, but the ones invisibly present in that nation's thoughts and actions. The symbols cited by the author may seem far-fetched, but they embody natural and historical phenomena. This reveals the Canetti enigma. He does not need to prove anything. He is free like a wind that is never right or wrong. The Canetti style is dissolved in this free medium.

The publication of selected extracts from *Crowds And Power* are published by the courtesy of the Munich-based magazine *Strana i Mir*.

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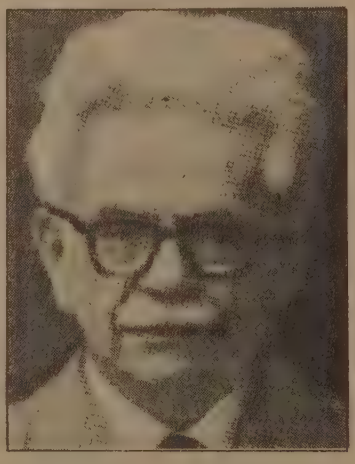
Nations and symbols

Elias Canetti



The attempts to penetrate to the essence of what is called a nation have very often suffered from one disadvantage. While focusing on definitions of the concept of nation, the thinkers attached the priority significance to the definitions proper: after an agreeable definition has been found, it will be possible to apply it indiscriminately to all nations. The usual criteria were shared languages and shared territories. The scholars referred to the traditions of literacy, history, political regime and what is known as the national spirit. However, it invariably turned out that the exceptions were more important than the rule itself. Hoping to catch the living tissue, the scholars only grabbed at the hem of an elusive garment. Life was slipping through their fingers, leaving the philosophers with empty hands.

...The discussion of nations will be futile, if we do not try to define nations in their variety...

It should be expected that a man conscious of his belonging to a specific nation will not feel lonely. As long as this belonging is concretized by other people or by himself, his impression of himself includes something broader, giving him the feeling of being a part of some great community. The man cannot remain indifferent to either the character of that community, or his own connection to it. There is more to that unity than the simply geographical unity of a territory painted in one colour on a map; a normal person does not worry about geography. Naturally, people can be concerned about borders, but finally territorial integrity is not something that matters terribly. Neither is language, however it might be defined or opposed to other languages. There is no doubt that words he has heard since early childhood can produce a tremendous influence on the man in times of trial. But it is not the vocabulary that the man stands for and is ready to die for. The history of his nation has even less to tell to the normal man...

The great community, the community the man feels a part of is the *mass* or the *massive symbol*. It is always characterized by features that chartacterize masses and their symbols: richness, the ability to grow, openness to the infinity, astounding integrity that is the first to leap to the eye and may even shock, the general rhythm and a sudden discharge... These qualities are easily recognizable in the feelings and impressions of masses about themselves. But symbols rarely exist *by themselves*. A person who feels himself to be a part of a nation, although in his own particular way, is inseparably connected with a certain massive symbol which is of paramount importance for the nation. The regular invocation of this symbol and the symbol's emergence at the right time is the continuity of national awareness. National awareness changes as the symbol changes. It is more mutable than many people think and it inspires hope that humanity will eventually survive.

Below we make an attempt to consider some nations from the viewpoint of their symbols, trying to be as impartial as possible.

The British. It will be wise to start this discussion with the nation

that does not like to make much noise about itself but has undoubtedly preserved the strongest national feeling: Britain. It is commonly known what *the sea* means for the British. But it is little known in what way the traditional British individualism is connected with the British attitude towards the sea. A Briton sees himself as the captain with a handful of people on board, while *the sea is all around and under him*. He is almost alone and he is vastly isolated even from the crew, because he is the captain. But he dominates the sea and this is the main thing. Ships are alone in the boundless expanses of seas, they are like separated individuals, but captains are their concrete personifications: captains give orders and their absolute prerogatives may not be questioned or doubted. The course of his ship is the order issued to the sea, and although the crew carries out the order, it is the sea that must obey. The captain selects the destination, and the living matter of the sea carries him and his ship to it – not without some resistance or storms, of course. The ocean has no limits and it is important to know whom the ocean would obey more willingly. The ocean is more easily conquered if the ultimate destination is a British colony. In this case the sea becomes a horse that knows its way.

Real ideologies of national claims and interests are always different from one another – one must listen carefully to them, scrutinize their symbolic significance

As for the British character, one must remember how capricious and changeable the sea is...The sea promises changes, but it can also herald danger.

A Briton's family life is such that it is sort of an addition to the sea: its main features are dependability and stability. Each family member has his or her place, and nothing can change this; even if the master of the house puts out to sea. No person's habits may be violated, neither may his or her property.

The Dutch. The significance of national symbols learned and accepted by the masses is nowhere revealed as clearly as in the opposition between the British and the Dutch. The two nations are close ethnically, linguistically, and religiously. Both nations are nations of sea-fares... The wars Britain and Holland waged were the wars of related rivals, almost brothers. However, there is one seemingly unimportant difference that is decisive. This difference is the one of the national symbols of the masses.

The Dutch had to *reclaim their land from the sea* before they started cultivating it. The shores were so low that dams had to be built to protect them from the sea. *A mass of men becomes equal to a dam:* they both help contain the sea. The dam continues to exist in their mentality in order to reappear in reality. The Dutch possess a surprising and ineradicable ability to preserve their sea limits in *their souls* in hard times.

For a Dutchman the danger is always behind his back. For him the sea has never been a conquered medium. The Dutch bravely fare the seas, but any Dutchman can be killed by the sea in his own home. Moreover, the Dutch can even purposefully unleash the sea in order to repel an enemy.

The Germans. The mass symbol of the Germans is *troops*. There is more to it than just troops: the massive symbol of the Germans is the *marching forest*. No modern country has preserved such a keen feeling of forest as Germany. The stalwartness and height of vertical tree trunks, their density, their mass fill the Germans' hearts with a deep and mysterious feeling of joy. Even today Germans seek refuge in the forest where their ancestors lived and they feel one with the trees...

In the forest which is usually composed of trees of one and the same variety their bark can be compared to armour, or the uniforms of a troop. Army and forest have always been one for Germans, although they never realized this. What others perceived as the coldness and lack of feeling of an army, for a German preserved the freshness and vitality of a forest. A German does not fear anything in the forest and feels secure in a tight troop formation. The straightness and hardiness of trees have always inspired Germans.

One should not ignore the influence of forest romanticism on the Germans. They have imbibed it together with hundreds of ballads and verse, and the forest described in them was called the German Forest.

The French. The massive symbol of the French is historically young: It's their *revolution*. Every year the French celebrate an anniversary of freedom. This day has become a national and folk celebration... People who are actually no more free and equal or brotherly than other nations can suddenly imagine that they are free, equal, and fraternal.

No national anthem had a destiny similar to the Marseillaise. It was a product of the revolutionary time. An outbreak of freedom that later became a regular occurrence waited for and celebrated every year has proved to be a highly convenient massive national symbol. As in days of old, it consolidated the nation. The French armies that conquered Europe were generated by the Revolution. The Revolution discovered Napoleon and crowned itself with great military glory. Victories belonged to the Revolution and its general, while the final defeat went to the king.

One may object to this interpretation of the Revolution as the massive national symbol of the French. The very word seems too general – it lacks the concreteness of the British captain or the German marching forest. But the revolution expresses itself in concrete motion and concrete opposition: a popular storm, the storming of Bastille... This most popular event of the past has become the French' national identity, making the French nation different and distinguishable from others... And when a revolution broke out in Russia, the national identity of the French was damaged.

The Swiss. If there is a state whose national integrity cannot be doubted, this state is Switzerland. The Swiss have a stronger patriotic feeling than many nations speaking *one* language. Neither the absence of a shared language, nor the variety of cantons, nor the differences in those cantons' social structure, nor the religious boundaries, nor the wars whose memory is still fresh – nothing has been able to shake the national awareness and unity of the Swiss. The Swiss have a massive national symbol that can be seen from anywhere in Switzerland that is stronger than any other national symbol – *the mountains*... The rocky peaks above and the integral gigantic whole below. This living body is the country itself.

The mountains are the only defence the Swiss have. They did not have to build it themselves as the Dutch did. They did not build it and they cannot destroy it. The sea is not threatening to ruin this natural dam. The mountains are always there; one only has to

know them. And the Swiss are exploring their mountains wherever it is possible. Like magnets, mountain ranges attract the subjects of various rulers who want to copy the Swiss and their ability to be fascinated, not scared, by mountains. Mountaineers from the remotest countries are like pilgrims and Switzerland is their shrine... One should consider to what extent this promotes international respect for the independence of the Swiss Confederation.

The Spaniards. Where a Briton sees himself as a captain, a Spaniard sees himself as a matador. Instead of the sea that obeys the captain, the man enters a fight with a raging bull surrounded by an enthusiastic crowd. The beast which the matador must slay according to all rules of the noble art of bullfighting is an ancient and treacherous monster from a legend. The fighter cannot succumb to fear: his self-control is everything for him. Thousands of eyes are watching his every move. This is nothing but the Roman circus arena that has survived to our time and over time the gladiator figthing with the beast has become a glorious knight. The Middle Ages changed the gladiator's meaning, his appearance, and most importantly, his prestige... The matador possesses an ultimate sense of proportion. He calculates every small step. His movements are graceful and precise like those of a dancer. But he delivers the *lethal stab in earnest, not jest.* Thousands of people see it, and their fervour makes death tens of times stronger. One starts feeling like a knight killing the bull, but the one feeling this is not an individual, but the cheering and excited crowd. Sitting around the arena and over the matador's head, people see themselves – as a mass. The crowd is a collective being consolidated around the bullfighting arena. Eyes meet eyes and every voice is the voice of the crowd.

Thus the Spaniard longing to become a matador gets used to the sight and the aspect of a certain mass of people and starts to understand it. The mass lives so intensively that it rejects many tendencies and developments which are inevitable in other countries. The meaningful figure of a bullfighter in the arena becomes the national symbol of the mass. Any time a Spaniard thinks about his compatriots collectively, he thinks about the place where they assemble most often...

The Italians. Italy can serve as the example of the sad lot of a country whose cities are haunted with great reminiscences of a glorious past and the present blends consciously with those reminiscences.

It is a risky business to try and breathe real life back to a city like Rome. Standing all around are buildings where ancient people used to amass, but now these buildings are empty. The colosseum is a well-preserved ruin, but it impresses the modern man with a feeling of loneliness and uselessness. However, the second Rome – the Rome of St. Peter – has not lost its old appeal. The Cathedral of St. Peter is crammed with pilgrims from all over the world. The problem, however, was that that second Rome was no good as the banner and the symbol of offended national feelings, for it continued to appeal to all people without distinction and its organization dated back to the time when the concept of nation in its modern interpretation did not yet exist.

The national feeling of Italy was kind of paralyzed between these two images. There was no escaping it: Rome was there and Italians used to be Romans centuries ago. Fascism opted for the easiest decision and clothed itself in the ancient garbs. The costume, however, was too big and the movements that the new wearer attempted to take were too sweeping: as a result fascism crippled itself. The Forum was excavated from the archeological dust, but is were not Romans who filled it. A bunch of flogs (the symbol of the consular power in Ancient Rome that became the symbol of Italian fascists. – **Ed.**) could only cause hatred in people who were flogged; does anyone takes pride in flogging? Fortunately for Italy, the attempt to *foist* a false symbol on the nation fell flat.

The talk of peoples and their features will always be futile, if we do not try to determine the subject of our debate in its peculiarity without succumbing to the temptation of exclusiveness

The Jews. There is no nation that is as difficult to understand as the Jews. They have dispersed all over populated lands and have lost their native land. Their ability to adapt has earned them fame, but notoriety as well; the degree of adaptability can be different, however. Jews may be Spaniards, Hindus, Chinese. They carry the language and culture of one country to another and cling to their language and culture more tightly than to their possessions...

They are surprising by the very fact of their existence. They are not the only nation whose representatives can be met anywhere in the world; Armenians, for instance have spread as widely. They are not the most ancient people either – the history of the Chinese is rooted much deeper in millennia. But of all the old people, the Jews are the only people that has been *wandering around the world for so long* . The Jews had more time than any other nation to vanish without a trace...

Until very recently the Jews had no territorial or linguistic unity. Most Jews could not speak Hebrew and spoke a hundred languages. For millions of Jews their ancient religion was nothing but an empty bag and the number of Jews turned Christians was growing, especially among intellectuals. An even greater number of Jews are atheists. At first glance, from the point of view of self-preservation, the Jews should have made the whole world forget that they are Jews and make themselves forget it. But they cannot forget; and most Jews do not want to either. One can't help wondering what makes the Jews so special and what connects them with each other when they call themselves Jews.

The answer is to be sought in the beginning of their history and it also reappears with astounding regularity – the *Exodus*, the flight from Egypt. The whole nation, although calculated, but still numbering thousands wanders in the desert for 40 years running. That people's legendary forefather had been promised a posterity numerous as grains of sea sand. And this posterity continues to wander, another generation of sand over sand...

The image of that crowd wandering in the desert for years and years has become the massive symbol of the Jews. It has remained as fresh and tangible as it was in the past. The Jews see themselves the way they were before they found a haven and scattered, when they were wandering as a single nation. In this state of *collectiveness* the Jewish people received its laws. The Jews see the destination – the destination of the mass. Adventure comes after adventure, and this is the Jews' shared lot. They are a *barren mass* there is nothing in this environment of the variety of entangled lives. Around the mass there is nothing but sand, the most barren of all masses. Nothing can intensify so much the feeling of loneliness, the feeling of loss like the sight of the sands. Sometimes the destination seems to have vanished and the mass is threatened with disintegration; but again and again it is galvanized by various blows – they consolidate the mass making it one again. What stretches for forty years in that mass may later stretch for an indefinitely long time. And the understanding of this time as the ultimate punishment becomes the torture of all further wanderings.

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To the question, "Which came first – word or deed?" the 38-year-old representative of the Idea Bank of the USSR **Sergei Agapitov** responds with certainty: first there was a leader who said the word itself, which then became deed.

Sergei was born in the Altai and graduated from the Tomsky Institute of Automated Systems of Management and Radioelectronics. For the development of the navigation safety systems, he received a gold medal of the All-Union Exhibition of Economic Achievements. Now he heads a banking "team" of nine people, but their capital is invaluable.

The Idea Bank of the USSR is a public organization founded for the collection, research, implementation of ideas and projects in various regions of human activities. Even a seemingly insane idea gets put into the computer – the bank's "safe," registered, the author receives a registration card, and later the idea is presented to as wide a circle of interested individuals and organizations as possible. The bank's capital consists of ten thousand ideas and projects. But thanks to Sergei's efforts, most of these are not just dead weight. To make sure that an interesting idea "works," he founds structures which continue to stand independently: The Institute for Global Research, the Earth Association, the firm AERO... Among the international projects realized by the bank are the telejournalists' autoexpedition, Around the World in 100 Days, and the autoexpedition Europe Without Borders.

The next expedition will be Columbus's New Road commemorating 500 years since the discovery of America. Its goal is not the developing of new lands, but the discovery of new people – new societal leaders whose ideas and actions anticipate the third millennium. An automobile caravan will start in August of 1992 in Spain and follow the route: Western Europe, Moscow, Siberia, Alaska, Canada, USA. It will end up in Washington in October of 1992.

Recently Sergei Agapitov opened another bank – the International Idea Bank. This one, like the Idea Bank of the USSR, accepts any idea or project by FAX 217-60-33 or by phone 217-60-39.

E.Bolsankova

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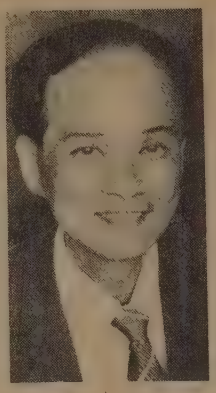


The guest from Taiwan, 40-year-old assistant to the director of the English-language government publication *The Free China Journal* **Wu Golin**, hopes to establish a representation of his newspaper in Moscow. His dream seems completely feasible, especially in these times of deideologization. What could be simpler – pay some money, rent premises and establish relations with the press.

But Soviet officials are of a different opinion. In spite of the fact that Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov recently paid a visit to the "unsinkable aircraft carrier" and unofficial contacts with Taipei are broadening, the Union Ministry of Foreign Affairs avoids everything which might anger the People's Republic of China. Although in Beijing itself contacts between the mainland and the "mutinous island" are regarded calmly enough. For example, the PRC gratefully accepted the gratis multimillion dollar aid from Taiwan to the central provinces, which had suffered from serious flooding.

Wu Golin finds himself in a very delicate situation here in the USSR – for the Soviet Union the island of Taiwan exists geographically but not politically.

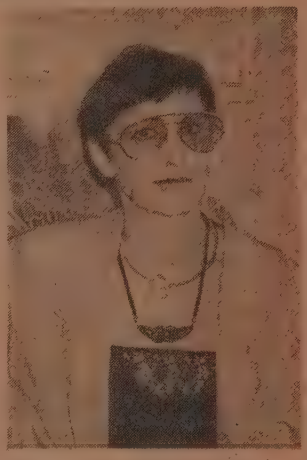
In his spare time the Taiwanese collects books of proverbs and sayings. In this sense the Soviet Union is for Wu Golin an invaluable treasure-chest – even more so because he understands their meaning perfectly without translation – he studied Russian at the National Chengchi University in Taipei.

A.Chudodeyev

* * *

Becoming famous in Soviet documentary film-making isn't easy. A hit of a movie is necessary, something significant for society, in a word something that hits the mark. The film *Is It Easy To Be Young?* brought fame to Juris Pod-

"Memorial" builds a memorial



The Sverdlovsk society "Memorial" has secured permission to erect a monument to the victims of the state repressions in the USSR. The sculptor Ernst Neizvestny designed the monument for his native city. But a photograph of the working model was brought to *New Times* by the deputy chairman of the Sverdlovsk "Memorial," 39-year-old literature teacher **Anna Pastukhova.**

"The ex-chairman of the Sverdlovsk 'Memorial' society, Igor Shvartz, wrote a letter to Ernst Neizvestny several years ago in which he told of the society's intent to erect a monument to the victims of the repression in Sverdlovsk," Anna relates. "The world renowned sculptor quickly responded, he had always nourished the warmest feelings for his home city. The project was estimated at 700,000 dollars, but Neizvestny refused to accept a fee."

The memorial will be 15 meters high, carved from granite from the Urals. Neizvestny realized his long-standing plan – creating a monument symbolizing the union of Europe and Asia. The Asian mask looks at Europe, and the European – at Asia.

During the Stalin era the main transit camp of the Gulag was located in Sverdlovsk. Through the Sverdlovsk region moved dispossessed and migrant people.

"You walk through the city and you think that you're walking on bones," says Anna. "Not long ago at the 12 kilometre of the old Moscow road they found human remains. From the first trial shaft they extracted 31 corpses. There was a memorial service and a cross was raised on the site of the excavations. How many more unknown graves are there in the city and its surrounding area?"

Ernst Neizvestny gave the design of the monument as a gift, but its construction will require much money. The Russian government has promised something – President Yeltsin met with Neizvestny and, as they say, approved the project. "Memorial" hopes to receive the rest of the sum in the form of donations from private individuals and organizations. The Sverdlovsk society "Memorial" account: 700417 Leninskoye otdeleniye, Zhilsotzbank, Sverdlovsk. A photograph of the model of the future monument see in issue No.32 on page 27.

nieks. G.Frank earned fame by *High Justice,* M.Goldovskaya by *Solovki Archipelago.* For the Latvian director **Laima Zurgina**, laureate of many international film festivals, the film was *And These Are My Sons...*

This film is about the tragic fate of the young men who died in the Soviet Army in peacetime because of "non-statutary relations" (this is the official military term for the systematic beatings and humiliation to which novices in the troops are subjected).

From her first film, *Maris Liepa* (it was her graduation work in 1971), Laima Zurgina has worked in the genre of psychological portraits. In her "gallery" are Raimonds Pauls, hockey player Helmuts Balderis, and Latvian poet Ojars Vacietis. For a long time Laima was sure that the sphere of her professional interests included only art and sports. But not long ago she shot *Categorical Imperative,* a film about society's road to democracy. And now *Sons...*

All the critics have forecast for the film a hard destiny because so far cost-and-profit mental attitude and good movies, needless to say documentaries, are incompatible. The Central Television gives no chance for hope either...

O.Vishnyakov

* * *

An exhibition of the work of the American artist **Judith Rothschild** will open in mid-September at the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. Its name — *Beyond the limits of of the plane: releif pictures by Judith Rothschild.*

These are actually half reliefs and half pictures. Judith employs such materials and such unusual technique that the forms she creates float in front of

the surface of the picture, as though there were nothing supporting them.

In early 1970s Rothschild, who had already earned herself a solid reputation in painting, departed from the customary art technique. With twenty-five years of creations on canvas behind her, Judith began to study the possibilities of relief. At that time American art was developing in a completely different direction, and Judith was considered a souce of extravaganza.

But, as often happens, the times caught up with the artist. Now Rothschild is at the centre of attention of American lovers of paintings and connoisseurs of art.

* * *

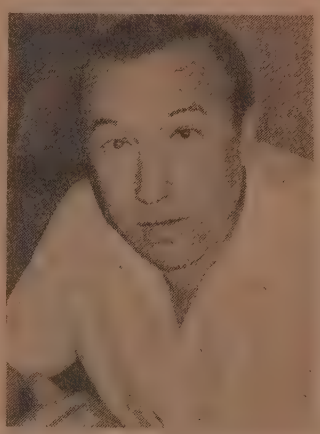
38-year-old **Evgenia Debryanskaya** is the leader of the Libertine Party and the only woman in our country who has openly announced that she is a lesbian. The basic demands of her party are the free sale of

narcotics and the legalization of prostitution. But so far prostitutes themselves do not actively support Debryanskaya. The party's extravagant slogans — "To the members of the CPSU — a sexual blockade" and "A country of fools needs a worthy leader" — often scare away even its potential members. As Debryanskaya asserts, several deputies would like to join the Libertines, but they fear that they would lose their mandate.

Evgenia believes in God, has been married, and has two children. After she finished school, Evgenia has never worked anywhere. At 16 she was expelled from the Komsomol for failure to appear at a day of unpaid labour. Upon moving from her native Sverdlovsk (where she lived for 16 years and where her hostility towards Yeltsin developed) to Moscow, Debryanskaya became a member of the Group of Trust, which was in opposition to those in power. Later, along with Valeria Novodvorskaya, she founded the Democratic Union. One of the next goals of Debryanskaya and her party is to register a Russian movement for the rights of lesbians.

Evgenia Debryanskaya has signed a contract with an American firm and is now writing her autobiography. In fact, her party receives aid from outside the USSR, although it is fairly insignificant.

He can give you a job



The 38-year-old general director of the society for youth employment The Labor Exchange, **Alexander Lazarev**, says that in spite of the expected increase in unemployment because of the transition to the market, people are coming to him at the exchange less frequently. In times of instability people accept any job if it's close to home with the usual set-up, they don't go after prestigious positions and specialities.

It is the most difficult for young people, who often don't have a speciality or high qualifications.

"Earlier young people were recruited for work by Komsomol," says Lazarev. "Every year 100,000 youths, usually without a speciality, were sent to develop the country's urgent projects. Since 1986 the state structures have taken on the responsibility for providing work for young men and women. But those structures suffer form the lack of information about the requirements of regions in manpower and from the lack of professionalism."

Lazarev considers it a sin not to use those people who have already worked in this field, for example, the staff of the Komsomol Cental Committee apparat.

Alexander Lazarev's responsibility was exactly that kind of activity — furnishing manpower for Western Siberia. The last time, in 1986, he brought to Siberia a top-notch Komsomol group of 5,000 people.

From his experience at the exchange he has drawn the following conclusion: there is a surplus of teachers and engineering-technical workers in the country, and not enough accountants, economists, and builders. Recently, many firms have come to the exchange looking for drivers. There are many people who want to take up farming.

Now the exchange is ready to provide work for 20 thousand people who have no profession, and perhaps even without necessitating a change of living quarters.

Pushkin on trial after his death

Anatoly Naumov,
Prof, L.L.D.

A case against Pushkin investigated by a court martial commission set up in a mounted regiment of household troops...

Started on February 3
Closed on February 19, 1837

Photo by Dmitry Borko

Some think that the sentence passed on Dantès after his duel with Pushkin is extremely mild. Specialists in the history of literature regard the trial of the principals and their seconds as a spectacle staged after the tsar's scenario. A legal examination of the case shows that such an interpretation is wrong.

Examination of the case started

On January 28, 1837, the day after the duel, Lieut-Gen. Bistrom, commander of the guards corps in which Dantès served, reported the incident to Nicholas I as well as the need to try the principals and their seconds by a court-martial. On January 29 Count Chernyshev, war minister, announced the tsar's will.

Having read the report on the January 27 duel between Dantès and Pushkin, His Majesty ordered that the two men, as well as all persons involved in the affair, should be tried by a court-martial, the announcement said. If foreigners happened to be among them, the tsar said in his order, they should not be questioned and included in the sentence. A special report should be presented on them, indicating the degree of their involvement.

A court-martial was set up at a mounted regiment which held a special place among other units of the guards corps. The point is that it was under the patronage of Nicholas I himself. Col. Brevern was appointed chairman of the court (officially called a court-martial commission) while other officers of the same regiment – Stolypin, Balabin, Annenkov, Shigorin, Chicherin, and Osorgin – were appointed members. The case was investigated by Col. Galakhov. Maslov, a regimental auditor, was charged with the duties of a secretary to keep a record of the case.

The court started its work on February 3. The judges combined the duties of investigators, prosecutors, and counsels for the defence. The examination lasted for 16 days. The judges mainly questioned the defendants (for instance, Dantès was questioned four times) and examined the documents relating to the duel. Among them were also the service records of officers Dantès and Danzas, a second of Pushkin. The judges could conclude from those documents that Dantès was a model officer. He "was not reprimanded, fined or put under arrest and was cited among others in the tsar's orders for his part in reviews and exercises."

A different character reference of Dantès was,

Tribune est

however, given by a historian who studied the archives of the regiment concerned. "On joining the regiment," he wrote, "Dantès gave a poor account of himself and proved to be a very undisciplined officer, and he remained such during his service in the regiment. During three years of service in the regiment he was penalized 44 times."

A special opinion of the regimental auditor

The court-martial commission tried to establish, among other things, who wrote the anonymous libellous letters received by Pushkin in November 1836 and in subsequent months (though the letters sent in subsequent months were lost). It is believed that precisely those letters led to the duel in November 1836. The members of the commission based their opinion of the duel events on their interpretation by Pushkin in his letters to the Dutch envoy (in January 1837) and by his second, and lyceum friend Danzas in his testimony.

On February 13, 1837, the commission concluded that it had finally examined all the particulars of the case. However, regimental auditor Maslov was of a different opinion and presented his report to the commission. Maslov, who apparently gained considerable experience in lawsuits, called attention to a number of flaws in the court investigation. He was the only one to have noticed the absence of the notorious "anonymous diploma" which was to become one of the main documents of the case. The auditor insistently called the attention of the commission to the fact that later on Pushkin received other insulting anonymous letters.

Maslov wondered whether there was sufficient evidence of the guilt of Dantès. Evidence could not be enough for a serious punishment and the killer of the poet could get off. That is why the auditor pointed out where additional evidence of the defendant's guilt could be found. For instance, he suggested questioning the poet's widow.

Having studied Maslov's report, the court-martial commission passed the following ruling: "on hearing the report of auditor Maslov the commission concludes that some explanations could be demanded from the widow, but since the commission found the case rather clear it decided to file the report and close the affair so as not to insult Mrs. Pushkin without reason by demanding explanations from her, as is suggested by auditor Maslov in his report."

Maslov was not the only one who insisted on questioning Natalia Pushkin. Gen. Apraksin, commander of a division, did not see anything wrong in questioning the poet's widow and left the matter "to the discretion of higher authorities". Apraksin certainly knew whether it was proper to do such things or not. He had a close relationship with the Tsar (being his partner in playing cards) and with the diplomatic circles (he was married to a daughter of the Naples envoy). The Dutch envoy, in his letter of March 1, 1837, also insisted on questioning Pushkin's widow.

Severe but fair?

The sentence was passed on February 19. "Proceeding from the evidence and the confession of the defendant (Dantès), the court-martial commission found him and Pushkin guilty of taking part in a duel which is strictly forbidden by law. It also found the defendant guilty of firing at Pushkin and wounding him as a result of which he died," the sentence says. "In accordance with article 139 of the army regulations and other laws cited herewith, the commission sentenced the defendant to death by hanging. The defendant Pushkin would also be sentenced to the same punishment. But since he died any judgement is no longer relevant. As for the defendant Danzas (Pushkin's second), he is to be hanged under Article 140 of the army regulations. The sentence is to be announced to the defendants and pending its execution the defendants must be kept under strict arrest."

The sentence is severe. But is it very fair? It is undoubtedly fair if we proceed from the laws chosen by the regimental auditor for this case. However, along with the army regulations and regulations issued by Peter the Great other laws were also in force.

Under the code of laws of the Russian Empire which took effect on January 1, 1835, the court could not sentence a person to death for taking part in a duel. The "mistake" of the court-martial commission could, of course, be explained by the inadequate professionalism of the regimental auditor who did not understand the distinction between the old and new criminal legislations. However, it is not the only reason for the severity of the sentence. The punishment meted out by the commission was much harsher than the sentences usually passed in similar cases.

Officers who took part in duels were transferred from guards units to ordinary army units, exiled to the Caucasus or imprisoned for a short time, while the seconds were often pardoned. It seems that the investigators and the court in general were in sympathy with the reasons which impelled Pushkin to take part in the duel.

A severe and equal punishment for both opponents (death penalty) could not already harm the poet who died in the duel. On the contrary, it could be a guarantee that the court of second instance and the Tsar would confirm a strict punishment (even if not death penalty). The judicial practice of that time with regard to seconds guaranteed mercy to Danzas on the part of higher instances.

There is one more important document in the case. It is a note on the degree of involvement of foreigners in the duel. The court agreed with the opinion of Pushkin and Danzas about the Dutch envoy: "Received at Pushkin's home, he tried to induce his wife to engage in love affair with his own son and spread a bad opinion about the behaviour of Pushkin and his wife."

"Let it be so, but..."

In accordance with the laws of that time the sentence passed by the court-martial commission was not final. The commander of the guards corps sent it to the war ministry together with the other opinions of other commanders in the corps. While all of them were against the death penalty for Dantès they proposed that he be degraded to the ranks, which was a very strict punishment for those times. Some insisted that Dantès should be degraded to the ranks for life.

So the case went to the auditor department of the war ministry. On March 17 the auditor-general passed a ruling under which Dantès was deprived of the Russian nobiliary rank and degraded to the ranks. As for Danzas, the auditor-general decided that he should be "kept under arrest in a fortress for two months and then returned to his former service." In view of Pushkin's death the auditor-general ruled that his criminal action, for which he was to be meted out the same punishment as the defendant Dantès, "should be buried in oblivion". The main conclusions of the court-martial commission and the auditor-general coincided.

On March 18, 1837, Nicholas I wrote the following remark on the auditor-general's ruling: "Let it be so, but the private Dantès, as not a Russian subject, should be deported under the supervision of a gendarme."

The mothers of POWs: who will help?

The people's committee for releasing Soviet POWs in Afghanistan, *Nadezhda,* appealed to the American human rights organization Freedom House with the request that they receive a delegation of mothers. Perhaps in the United States the poor mothers will be better understood? We publish the response of Freedom House

To Evgenia Poplavskaya, chairman of the people's committee *Nadezhda*:

I understand the wish of the mothers of POWs to come here in order to find out something about the fate of their sons. You have sat at home for so many years, uninformed and without support. I have thought much about your letter, and this is what I would like to say to you.

The main goal of our project is to free the remaining POWs in Afghanistan and to discover the fate of those who were reported missing. Does a trip to the US of a delegation of mothers forward this goal? Three years ago, when the US took a more active interest in the events in Afghanistan, this certainly would have had positive results. But now, it seems to me, such a visit would be useless.

Of course, people in America understand the plight of the mothers who have lost their children, but it's unlikely that this mission will help free anyone.

You write that you want to use "this channel," meaning America, but it seems to me that now everything depends on your own government. It is in the Kremlin, not the White House, that real power is concentrated which could help achieve affirmative results.

Every time we talk to mujahedin about releasing Soviet POWs they respond: this question will be decided decisively only if all military action is stopped; the release of POWs is only one of many political problems which must be solved as a whole.

According to the US government data, in 1990 military supplies from the Soviet Union to the Najibullah regime amounted to 3.4 billion dollars. This is roughly 300 million dollars a month. In addition there was about 700 million dollars of economic aid, mainly food and fuel. It is expected that in 1991 Soviet supplies will remain at the same level.

The United States continues to support the Afghan opposition, but percentage-wise this corresponds to a trivial part of Soviet supplies. And last May the Bush administration announced that it did not even intend to include in the US budget funds for helping the mujahedin.

Not long ago the US Senate published a report in which it was shown that between January of 1989 and March of 1991 the Kabul regime launched against the inhabitants of Afghanistan 1,548 SCUD missiles, supplied by the Soviet Union. During only the first three months of this year 44 SCUD missiles were launched, 35 of them (from the 17th to the 31st of March) against Khost.

We all witnessed the war in the Persian Gulf, during which Iraq launched 58 SCUD missiles. In spite of the fact that they were four times less powerful than those which fall in Afghanistan, the world was horrified by the cruelty of the Iraqi government.

The Afghan launching by SCUDs and the constant bombings continue, even though Soviet troops were withdrawn some two years ago. Of course, the Afghan opposition answers with fire, and this also brings new victims. The war continues, and although America bears some responsibility, the largest blame is on the shoulders of the Soviet Union as the supplier of a huge quantity of heavy weaponry. And while these supplies continue, Soviet soldiers will sit in prison.

Now you must understand why I suggest that you should direct your efforts towards changing the position of your own government. I know how laborious this is, demanding much time and energy.

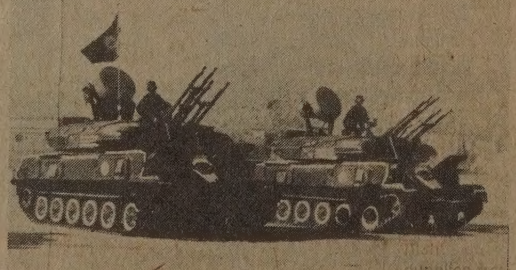
For eight years, beginning in November 1980, I tried to influence my government by writing countless letters to senators, congressmen, and the White House. This was a veritable battle in which many people helped me. The biggest part in it was played by Senator Humphrey and President Reagan, who personally received the Senator and me in January of 1988. During the meeting we presented the President with a list of 18 Soviet POWs. Thanks to Mr Reagan's, soon seven of them were released and delivered to the US. But of course my four trips to Pakistan and Afghanistan, where I met with Soviet POWs and negotiated with mujahedin about their release, were an important part of this process. Subsequently, several of those who had been released returned to the Soviet Union.

Now Senator Humphrey and President Reagan have retired and in America the Afghanistan issue has been put on the back burner. When I was occupied with Soviet POWs, the Soviet government was indifferent to their fate, and the American government did not consider it of primary importance. Many Soviet POWs who were already in the US and Canada helped us a lot in our work. I especially want to mention Nikolai Movchan who spoke in America, Canada, and many European countries, denouncing the unjust war and calling on the peoples of the world to help free the Soviet POWs remaining in Afghanistan. Two more former POWs, Igor Kovalchuk and Sergei Busov, took part along with Nikolai and me in the US Congressional hearings on Afghanistan and POWs. It is possible that similar hearings in the USSR Supreme Soviet could facilitate the solution of the problem. But along with Soviet POWs, one must not forget the mujahedin POWs, whose mothers also wait for them. And, finally, the supporters of Najibullah who hold the mujahedin captive.

On May 20, 1985, Israel exchanged 1,150 Palestinian prisoners for 3 of its own. Among the liberated Palestinians were a few terrorists, and Israel was criticized for this. But the government firmly decided to save its people.

There are at least three thousand political prisoners in Najibullah's prisons, including members of the Afghan opposition. But there are less than one hundred Soviet POWs in Afghanistan. Maybe the Soviet government will follow Israel's example? Could they put pressure on Najibullah to release three thousand people in exchange for the remaining Soviet POWs?

Lyudmila Torn,
director
of the Soviet branch,
Freedom House
NEW YORK



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